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SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

AND

OTHER ESSAYS

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SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

AND

ESSAY ON ENGLISH DICTIONARIES

BY THE LATE

THOMAS SPENCER BAYNES, LL.B., LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF LOGIC, METAPHYSICS AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS

EDITOR OF THE NINTH EDITION OF THE "ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA"

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL PREFACE

BY

PROFESSOR LEWIS CAMPBELL

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PREFACE.

THOMAS SPENCER BAYNES, the writer of these essays, was born at Wellington, in Somersetshire, on the 24th of March, 1823, and died in London on the 31st of May, 1887.

His father, Joseph Baynes, was for fifty years the minister of the Baptist congregation at Wellington; and his mother, whose maiden name was Ash, was a descendant of Ash, the lexicographer. Thomas Spencer's childhood and early youth were spent in his native Somersetshire, amid scenes and associations which left a deep and permanent impression upon an unusually receptive mind; and the dialect and folk-lore of the district contributed much to the enrichment of his later studies in English. To the simple and pious surroundings of his paternal home there were added many delightful memories of Rumhill House, the neighbouring country seat of Mr. and Mrs. Cadbury, where much of his boyhood was passed. After his too brief school days at Bath and a mistaken attempt to secure for him a commercial career, for which he had no desire, his parents yielded to his urgent wish

to qualify for the ministry, and he commenced a two years' course of study in the Baptist College at Bristol. Then, like many Nonconformist students of that day, he was led by a widening ambition, of which the first sign appeared in his matriculation at London, to take a full course of university study in Edinburgh. He was twenty when he went there, and his curriculum lasted five years. Among many potent influences which surrounded him during this period, the strongest was that of Sir William Hamilton, the most learned of Scottish philosophers and one of the most stimulating of teachers. The young student's mind, without losing anything of its seriousness, expanded on all sides, till it became impossible for him to return into the old groove. Scholastic and literary ambitions overbore the aspirations of the preacher. He became the centre of a group of friends, not unremarkable, both within the university and beyond it; and after graduating in the London University in 1850 his influence as a teacher of philosophy in Edinburgh, first at the Philosophical Institution, and afterwards as Sir William Hamilton's assistant, obtained for him a wider recognition. Amongst the most distinguished of his younger associates were Charles Stanford, George Wilson the technologist, and Dallas, afterwards the literary critic of the

Times and author of *The Gay Science*, John Skelton and G. H. Lewes. He was the recognised expositor of the Hamiltonian philosophy, not only in the lecture room, but in authorship. The translation of the *Port Royal Logic* with a learned introduction, and the *Essay on the New Analytic*, in which, amongst other logical exposition, Hamilton's invention or discovery of the "quantification of the predicate" was clearly set forth, attracted considerable attention and materially added to his reputation. Altogether, the Edinburgh period, which came to an end, after a partial break-down in health, in 1854, was one both of strenuous exertion and of rich and varied mental experience.

There followed two years of comparative retirement and leisure, passed chiefly at Rumhill, which was now his home. There he wrote a tractate on the Somersetshire dialect, which attracted the attention of the late Prince Lucien Bonaparte, and led afterwards to further association between these two students of the varieties of English speech. The essay on Sir William Hamilton in the volume of "Edinburgh Essays" was written about the same time.


Amongst his Edinburgh associates he had been foremost in various journalistic enterprises, and when in 1856 the *Leader*, a brilliant literary periodical, passed into the hands of his life-long

friend, Mr. Edward F. S. Pigott, he joined the staff of writers. This drew him to London, and shortly afterwards he was appointed Examiner in Philosophy for the University of London. In 1857 he married Miss Gale, and settled in the neighbourhood of Regent's Park. New ties brought new responsibilities, and the demands on his leisure increased with an increasing social circle; but with all this his journalistic work did not suffer. He became a regular contributor to the *Daily News*, then in the tenth year of its existence, and in 1858 he was established in the office as assistant-editor. For six years his labours in that capacity were unremitting; and his leaders, especially on foreign questions, added greatly to the importance of the journal. He was the keen advocate of progress, and of liberal causes everywhere. "The subject of most frequent recurrence with him," writes one who has examined into the matter, "are the dealings of Russia and Austria in Poland, the settlement of Italy, the relations of Prussia and Denmark, and the American War of Emancipation. Oppression in any form was hateful to him. The articles which found most immediate recognition and gratitude from those on whose behalf they were written, were the series supporting the cause of Denmark against Prussia, and the still more important series on the American War.

On both of these questions he felt and wrote very strongly; and so sensible were the Danes of his energetic advocacy of their cause that some of the leading men in Copenhagen invited him to visit Denmark, which he did in 1862, accompanied by his wife. On the American War he seems to have written about 200 articles. He was far-sighted enough to anticipate the coming rupture, and had made himself master of the situation before the struggle actually commenced. He was present in the gallery of the House of Commons when the Alabama difficulty first made its appearance, no bigger than a man's hand, and that hand Earl Russell's. Hurrying back to his pen at the *News* office, he wrote the first editorial article that appeared against the conduct of Lord John's Government." In the midst of these absorbing duties, he found time not only for practical educational work in Bedford College and elsewhere, but for extending his studies in the English dialects and in English etymology generally. In 1860 he wrote for Prince Lucien Bonaparte a version of the "Song of Solomon" in the Somerset dialect, to form one of the series of versions in dialect of the same book by Barnes, Robson, Baird and others.

During this London period his intellectual energy was at its height. But the long-continued strain led to a serious break-down in 1864; and,

after a partial recovery, it became necessary to look for some less exacting occupation. The death of his friend and co-examiner, Prof. Ferrier, and the promotion of Prof. Veitch to Glasgow in the same year, made vacancies in both the philosophical chairs in the University of St. Andrews; and to one of these, that of Logic, Metaphysics, and English Literature, Baynes was appointed. The election was a happy one. His combination of literary with philosophical attainments, his reputation as the favourite pupil and assistant of Sir William Hamilton, recommended him at once to the Scottish students, with whom his own early experience inclined him to sympathise; while his knowledge of the world, and ripening wisdom, gave him an exceptional influence over them. His devotion to them, and their love and reverence for him, went on increasingly until the close. His philosophic teaching was of course more than adequate, but the comparatively novel task of educating men in English Literature had even more fascination for his mind. He renewed the study of Shakespeare with increased ardour under these fresh conditions; and, after some years, his investigations began to shape themselves towards a fruitful result. He contemplated an edition in which the elucidation of obscure and unfamiliar words should form one




special feature, and of the essays in this volume those on "Shakespearian Glossaries" and "New Shakespearian Interpretations" belong to this period. Other studies in English Literature made their appearance in an article on "English Dictionaries" for the *Edinburgh Review* (July, 1868), on "Chaucer" in the same review in 1870, and on "Shelley" in April, 1871. The article on "Aryan Mythology" in 1870 is on a subject bearing at once on literature and philosophy; while those on Tylor's *Primitive Culture* (January, 1872), on Fraser's *Berkeley* in July of the same year, and on Darwin's *Expression of the Emotions* in April, 1873, were his chief published writings on philosophy during this period.

In 1873, all other literary work was for the time superseded by his acceptance of the general editorship of the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The organisation and oversight of this great work absorbed all the energy that could be spared from his professorial duties, and those of the London examinership, to which he had been re-appointed. After some years of this labour, he had a serious illness—aggravated by the loss of his favourite brother—which necessitated a complete rest. With his wife he spent some time in Germany, where his health was for the time renewed. He found it necessary, however, to devolve some part of the labour upon

others; and in 1880 Prof. Robertson Smith, who had already considerably relieved him, was appointed co-editor. Even before this measure of relief, he had returned to his Shakespearian studies, and the essay here republished, entitled "What Shakespeare learned at School," appeared in three numbers of *Fraser's Magazine* in 1879 and 1880 during the editorship of Principal Tulloch. It was always his intention, when the work on the *Encyclopædia* was ended, to complete and publish a cycle of Shakespearian papers, including, with those already mentioned, others of which he had already laid down the lines, and towards which he had accumulated most of the material. Unhappily, the only further Shakespearian work of his which saw the light was the article "Shakespeare" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. This is here republished as it first appeared. In editing himself, he was compelled to use severe compression; and, had he lived to prepare the article for separate publication, he would have developed many points which had cost him much pleasurable labour in the way of research, but were in the end dismissed in a few sentences.

Nevertheless, the work as it is here published, with the kind permission of the Messrs. Black, will be found very deserving of renewed attention. In the course of its preparation he

visited Stratford as the guest of the late Mr. Charles A. Flower, of Avonbank, who lent him much kindly assistance towards the study of Warwickshire topography, and was greatly struck by his guest's wonderful "eye for country". The strength of the essay lies, however, not so much in the special as in the general preparation of the writer. It was deeply rooted in his own life, and drew upon his whole past experience, in the world, not less than in the study. His attempt to replace Shakespeare in his actual environment is wonderfully successful; and, amidst such a farrago of all shades of probability, to have taken a definite line and held to it, with so much substantial likelihood, is surely a remarkable achievement. High authorities will sometimes in complimenting a writer use language which they would possibly not employ to indifferent persons; still the fact remains that Halliwell Phillipps spoke of having "devoured" Baynes' "splendid essay"; that the late Prof. Minto, "sensible of a great expansion of knowledge," regarded it as "far and away the most suggestive biography of Shakespeare yet written"—"a brilliant piece of writing"—"a perfect picture of the man"; and that Bishop Charles Wordsworth, no mean Shakespearian scholar, wrote as follows: "I can only describe it as representing an enormous



amount of multifarious reading and of energetic thought, *boiled down* to a consistency so refined that it gives no sign of the process it has undergone. It strikes me as the most wonderfully massive and complete piece of work in the way of literary criticism I have ever seen; and I doubt whether there is anything to equal it in that line."

Of Prof. Baynes' work among the students at St. Andrews, I have already briefly spoken. Like a true educator, his interest in them, wherever possible, was continued into their after life, and he has given many men a helping hand at critical moments in their career. Of what he was to his colleagues, and to all his friends, in spite, latterly, of failing health, there is not room to speak at large. Amongst the closest and most long-continued intimacies was that with Principal Tulloch, who relied much on Baynes' calm and experienced judgment. The general feeling was expressed, at the time of his death, in the following Minute of the University Senate, more expressive and heartfelt than such documents are apt to be:—

"Professor Baynes was known to all his colleagues as one of the wisest and most genial, as well as most distinguished, members of the academic staff which the University of St. Andrews has possessed during the present generation. Many students scattered in the

various professions, and in distant lands, will lament the loss of an inspiring teacher, a learned guide to literature and philosophy, and an ever sympathetic friend. Professor Baynes' removal makes a gap in the professoriate which will be increasingly felt as time goes on. His academic position, his many-sided attainments, and his wide acquaintance with literature and literary men had an important bearing on the influence and reputation of the university, which is now lost to it; while his friends miss the bright and genial presence, and the ever happy influence of a wise counsellor on all questions of public and academic policy."

In 1877 he had been elected a member of the Athenæum Club by the committee under the well-known rule. And during the ten years of life which remained to him after that, he was a familiar figure there, and enjoyed the opportunity of intercourse with congenial minds. His cheery presence and quick-witted talk made him a welcome comrade.

A memorial-portrait by Mr. Lowes Dickinson, the gift of friends and past and present students, was presented to Mrs. Baynes in 1888, the year following her husband's death; a fitting tribute, not only to his worth, but to the warmth and brightness of a companionship which had been for thirty years his constant stay, and with-

out which, during many days of trial and discouragement, his work, which has borne such lasting fruit, would have been impossible.

Though he died before his time, few lives have been more complete and full. He had realised, as few men do, the significance of the successive impressions which he received so vividly in a changeful life—above all, perhaps, in the London period, when his intellectual efforts were most concentrated. Afterwards, in times of comparative leisure, and also of suffering, his whole nature was mellowed, deepened, and harmonised. And, amongst many fruits of his long experience, perhaps none was more charming than his power of sympathising with the troubles and making allowance for the errors of his friends.

Amongst these, his pupils at St. Andrews must always be reckoned. He will never be forgotten by them; and they will recognise in many parts of this volume “the sound of a voice that is still”.

Best acknowledgments are due to the Messrs. Black, and to Messrs. Longmans & Co., for permission to publish the Essays contained in this volume.

LEWIS CAMPBELL.

NICE, 19th March, 1894.

SHAKESPEARE.¹

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616), the national poet of England, the greatest dramatist that modern Europe has produced, was born in April, in the year 1564, at Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick. The known facts of the poet's personal history are comparatively few, and before giving them in order we propose considering in some detail the larger educational influences which helped to stimulate his latent powers, to evoke and strengthen his poetical and patriotic sympathies, and thus prepare and qualify him for his future work. In dealing with these influences we are on firm and fruitful ground. We know, for example, that Shakespeare was born and lived for twenty years at Stratford-upon-Avon; and we can say therefore with certainty that all the physical and moral influences of that picturesque and richly-storied Midland district melted as years went by into the full current of his ardent blood, became indeed the vital element, the very breath of life his expanding spirit breathed. We know a good deal about his home, his parents, and his domestic surroundings; and these powerful factors in the development of any mind gifted with insight and sensibility must have acted with redoubled force on a nature so richly and harmoniously endowed as that of the Stratford poet. It would be difficult indeed to overestimate the combined effect of these vital elements on

¹ Contributed to the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

his capacious and retentive mind, a mind in which the receptive and creative powers were so equally poised and of such unrivalled strength. This review of the larger influences operating with concentrated force during the critical years of youth and early manhood will help to connect and interpret the few and scattered particulars of Shakespeare's personal history. These particulars must indeed be to some extent connected and interpreted in order to be clearly understood, and any intelligible account of Shakespeare's life must therefore take the shape of a biographical essay, rather than of a biography proper. We may add that the sketch will be confined to the points connected with Shakespeare's local surroundings and personal history. The large literary questions connected with his works, such as the classification, the chronology, and analysis of the plays, could not of course be adequately dealt with in such a sketch. It is the less necessary that this wider task should be attempted as the main points it embraces have recently been well handled by competent Shakespearian scholars. The best and most convenient manuals embodying the results of recent criticism and research will be referred to at the close of the article.¹ Meanwhile we have first to look at the locality of Shakespeare's birth, both in its material and moral aspects.

Warwickshire was known to Shakespeare's contemporaries as the central county or heart of England. It was the middle shire of the Midlands, where the two great Roman roads crossing the island from east to west and west to east met,—forming at their point of junction the centre of an irregular St. Andrew's cross,

¹ In the *Encyclopædia Britannica* the article was followed by a Bibliography compiled by Mr. H. R. Tedder.

of which the arms extended from Dover to Chester on the one side and from Totnes to Lincoln and the north on the other. The centre in which these roads—Watling Street and the Fosse Way—thus met was early known from this circumstance as the High Cross. Being the most important Midland position during the Roman occupations of the country, several Roman stations were formed in the neighbourhood of this venerable Quatre Bras. Of these Camden specifies the ancient and flourishing city of Clychester, represented in part by the modern Clybrook, and Manduessedum, the memory of which is probably retained in the modern Mancettar. Important Roman remains have also been found within a few miles of Stratford at Alcester, a central station on the third great Roman road, Ricknild Street, which runs from south to north across the western side of the county. In later times, when means of communication were multiplied, the great roads to the north-west still passed through the county, and one of them, the mail road from London through Oxford to Birmingham, Stafford, and Chester, was the "streete" or public way that crossed the Avon at the celebrated ford spanned in 1843 by Sir Hugh Clopton's magnificent bridge of fourteen arches. Immediately beyond the bridge rose the homely gables and wide thoroughfares of Shakespeare's native place.

In Shakespeare's time Warwickshire was divided by the irregular line of the Avon into two unequal but well-marked divisions, known respectively, from their main characteristics, as the woodland and the open country, or more technically as the districts of Arden and Feldon. The former included the thickly-wooded region north of the Avon, of which the celebrated

forest of Arden was the centre, and the latter the champaign country, the rich and fertile pasture lands between the Avon and the line of hills separating Warwick from the shires of Oxford and Northampton. Shakespeare himself was of course familiar with this division of his native shire, and he has well expressed it in Lear's description of the section of the kingdom assigned to his eldest daughter Goneril :—

“Of all these bounds,—even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,—
We make thee lady.”

No better general description of Warwickshire could indeed be given than is contained in these lines. Taking the Roman roads, Watling and Ricknild Streets, as boundaries, they vividly depict the characteristic features of the county, including its plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads. The old and central division of Arden and Feldon is clearly embodied in the second line, “with shadowy forests and with champains rich'd”. This distinction, practically effaced in modern times by agricultural and mining progress, was partially affected by these causes even in Shakespeare's own day. The wide Arden, or belt of forest territory which had once extended not only across the county but from the Trent to the Severn, was then very much restricted to the centre of the shire, the line of low hills and undulating country which stretched away for upwards of twenty miles to the north of Stratford. The whole of the northern district was, it is true, still densely wooded, but the intervening patches of arable and pasture land gradually encroached more and more upon the bracken and brushwood, and every year larger areas were cleared

and prepared for tillage by the axe and the plough. In the second half of the sixteenth century, however, the Arden district still retained enough of its primitive character to fill the poet's imagination with the exhilarating breadth and sweetness of woodland haunts, the beauty, variety, and freedom of sylvan life, and thus to impart to the scenery of "As You Like It" the vivid freshness and reality of living experience. In this delightful comedy the details of forest-life are touched with so light but at the same time so sure a hand as to prove the writer's familiarity with the whole art of venery, his thorough knowledge of that "highest franchise of noble and princely pleasure" which the royal demesnes of wood and park afforded. In referring to the marches or wide margins on the outskirts of the forest, legally known as purlieus, Shakespeare indeed displays a minute technical accuracy which would seem to indicate that in his early rambles about the forest and casual talks with its keepers and woodmen he had picked up the legal incidents of sylvan economy, as well as enjoyed the freedom and charm of forest-life. Throughout the purlieus, for instance, the forest laws were only partially in force, while the more important rights of individual owners were fully recognised and established. Hence it happened that Corin's master, dwelling, as Rosalind puts it in a quaint but characteristic simile that betrays her sex, "here in the skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat," could sell "his cote, his flock, and bounds of feed," and that Celia and Rosalind were able to purchase "the cottage, the pasture, and the flock". It may be noted, too, that, in exchange for the independence the dwellers in the purlieus acquired as private owners, they had to relinquish their common

right or customary privilege of pasturing their cattle in the forest. Sheep, indeed, were not usually included in this right of common, their presence in the forest being regarded as inimical to the deer. When kept in the purlieus, therefore, they had to be strictly limited to their bounds of feed, shepherded during the day and carefully folded every night, and these points are faithfully reflected by Shakespeare. Again, only those specially privileged could hunt venison within the forest. But if the deer strayed beyond the forest bounds they could be freely followed by the dwellers in the purlieus, and these happy hunting grounds outside the forest precincts were in many cases spacious and extensive. The special office of a forest ranger was indeed to drive back the deer straying in the purlieus. The banished duke evidently has this in mind when, as a casual denizen of the forest, he proposes to make war on its native citizens :—

“Come, shall we go and kill us venison?
And yet it irks me, the poor dappled fools,
Being native burghers of this desert city,
Should, in their own confines, with forked heads,
Have their round haunches gor’d.”

And the melancholy Jaques, refining as usual with cynical sentimentalism on every way of life and every kind of action, thinks it would be a special outrage

“To fright the animals, and to kill them up,
In their assign’d and native dwelling place”.

Not only in “As You Like It,” but in “Love’s Labour’s Lost,” in “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” in the “Merry Wives of Windsor,” indeed throughout his dramatic works, Shakespeare displays the most intimate

knowledge of the aspects and incidents of forest life ; and it is certain that in the first instance this knowledge must have been gained from his early familiarity with the Arden district. This, as we have seen, stretched to the north of Stratford in all its amplitude and variety of hill and dale, leafy covert and sunny glade, giant oaks and tangled thickets,—the woodland stillness being broken at intervals not only by the noise of brawling brooks below and of feathered outcries and flutterings overhead, but by dappled herds sweeping across the open lawns or twinkling in the shadowy bracken, as well as by scattered groups of timid conies feeding, at matins and vespers, on the tender shoots and sweet herbage of the forest side. The deer-stealing tradition is sufficient evidence of the popular belief in the poet's love of daring exploits in the regions of vert and venison, and of his devotion, although in a somewhat irregular way perhaps, to the attractive woodcraft of the park, the warren, and the chase. The traditional scene of this adventure was Charlecote Park, a few miles north-east of Stratford ; but the poet's early wanderings in Arden extended, no doubt, much further afield. Stirred by the natural desire of visiting at leisure the more celebrated places of his native district, he would pass from Stratford to Henley and Hampton, to Wroxall Priory and Kenilworth Castle, to Stoneleigh Abbey and Leamington Priors, to Warwick Keep and Guy's Cliffe. The remarkable beauty of this last storied spot stirs the learned and tranquil pens of the antiquaries Camden and Dugdale to an unwonted effort of description, even in the pre-descriptive era. "Under this hill," says Camden, "hard by the river Avon, standeth Guy-cliffe, others call it Gib-cliffe, the dwell-

ing house at this day of Sir Thomas Beau-foe, descended from the ancient Normans line, and the very seate itselfe of pleasantnesse. There have yee a shady little wood, cleere and cristall springs, mossy bottomes and caves, medowes alwaies fresh and greene, the river rumbling here and there among the stones with his stream making a milde noise and gentle whispering, and besides all this, solitary and still quietnesse, things most grateful to the Muses." But the whole of the circuit was richly wooded, the towns, as the names indicate, being forest towns,—Henley-in-Arden, Hampton-in-Arden,—while the castles and secularised religious houses were paled off within their own parks and bounds from the sylvan wilderness around them. Some, like the celebrated castle of the Mountfords, called from its pleasant situation amongst the woods Beaudesert, having been dismantled during the Wars of the Roses, were already abandoned, and had in Shakespeare's day relapsed from the stately revelry that once filled their halls into the silence of the surrounding woods. At every point of the journey, indeed, as the poet's eager and meditative eye embraced new vistas, it might be said :—

"Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees".

On the southern margin of the Arden division, towards the Avon, small farms were indeed already numerous, and cultivation had become tolerably general. But the region as a whole still retained its distinctive character as the Arden or wooded division of the county. Even now, indeed, it includes probably more woods and parks than are to be found over the same area in any other English shire.

While parts of the Arden district were in this way under cultivation, it must not be supposed that the champaign or open country to the south of the Avon, the Feldon division of the county, was destitute of wood; on the contrary, its extensive pastures were not only well watered by local streams overshadowed by willow and alder, but well wooded at intervals by groups of more stately trees. The numerous flocks and herds that grazed throughout the valley of the Red Horse found welcome shelter from the noonday heat and the driving wind under the green roofs and leafy screens that lined and dotted their bounds of feed. And, although even the grazing farms were comparatively small, almost every homestead had its group of protecting elms, its out-lying patch of hanging beech and ash, or straggling copse of oak and hazel. This is still reflected in such local names as Wood Park, Shrub Lands, Ockley Wood, Furze Hill, Oakham, Ashborne, Alcott Wood, Berecote Wood, and Radland Gorse. These features gave interest and variety to the Feldon district, and justified the characteristic epithet which for centuries was popularly applied to the county as a whole, that of "woody Warwickshire". And Shakespeare, in passing out of the county on his London journeys, would quickly feel the difference, as beyond its borders he came upon stretches of less clothed and cultivated scenery. As his stout gelding mounted Edgehill, and he turned in the saddle to take a parting look at the familiar landscape he was leaving, he would behold what Speed, in his enthusiasm, calls "another Eden, as Lot the plain of Jordan". While the general aspect would be that of green pastures and grassy levels, there would be at the same time the picturesque inter-

mingling of wood and water, of mill and grange and manor house, which gives light and shade, colour and movement, interest and animation, to the plainer sweeps and more monotonous objects of pastoral scenery.

On the historical side Warwickshire has points of interest as striking and distinctive as its physical features. During the Roman occupation of the country it was, as we have seen, the site of several central Roman stations, of which, besides those already noticed, the fortified camps of Tripontium and Præsidium on the line of the Avon were the most important. A Roman road crossed the Avon at Stratford, and radiating north and south soon reached some of the larger Roman towns of the west, such as Uriconium and Corinium. Between these towns were country villas or mansions, many of them being, like that at Woodchester, "magnificent palaces covering as much ground as a whole town". The entire district must in this way have been powerfully affected by the higher forms of social life and material splendour which the wealthier provincials had introduced. The immediate effect of this Roman influence on the native populations was, as we know, to divide them into opposed groups whose conflicts helped directly to produce the disastrous results which followed the withdrawal of the Romans from the island. But the more permanent and more important effect is probably to be traced in the far less obstinate resistance offered by the Celtic tribes of Mid Britain to the invading Angles from the north and Saxons from the south, by whom themselves and their district were eventually absorbed. Instead of the fierce conflicts and wrathful withdrawal or extermination of the conquered Britons which prevailed further east,

and for a time perhaps further west also, the intervening tribes appear to have accepted the overlordship of their Teutonic neighbours and united with them in the cultivation and defence of their common territory. The fact that no record of any early Angle conquest remains seems to indicate that, after at most a brief resistance, there was a gradual coalescence of the invading with the native tribes, rather than any fierce or memorable struggle between them. Even the more independent and warlike tribes about the Severn repeatedly joined the Saxon Hwiccas, whose northern frontier was the forest of Arden, in resisting the advance of Wessex from the south. And for more than a hundred years after the establishment of the central kingdom of the Angles, the neighbouring Welsh princes are found acting in friendly alliance with the Mercian rulers. It was thus the very district where from an early period the two race elements that have gone to the making of the nation were most nearly balanced and most completely blended. The union of a strong Celtic element with the dominant Angles is still reflected in the local nomenclature, not only in the names of the chief natural features, such as rivers and heights,—Arden and Avon, Lickey, Alne, and Thame,—but in the numerous *combes* and *cotes* or *cots*, as in the reduplicative Cotswold, in the *duns*, *dons*, and *dens*, and in such distinctively Celtic elements as *man*, *pol*, *try*, in names of places scattered through the district. The *cotes* are, it is true, ambiguous, being in a majority of cases perhaps Saxon rather than Celtic, but in a forest country near the old Welsh marches many must still represent the Celtic *coet* or *coed*, and in some cases this is clear from the word itself, as in Kingscot, a variation of Kings-

wood, and even Charlecote exists in the alternative form of Charlewood. This union of the two races, combined with the stirring conditions of life in a wild and picturesque border country, gave a vigorous impulse and distinctive character to the population, the influence of which may be clearly traced in the subsequent literary as well as in the political history of the country. As early as the ninth century, when the ravages of the Danes had desolated the homes and scattered the representatives of learning in Wessex, it was to western Mercia that King Alfred sent for scholars and churchmen to unite with him in helping to restore the fallen fortunes of religion and letters. And after the long blank in the native literature produced by the Norman Conquest the authentic signs of its indestructible vitality first appeared on the banks of the Severn. Layamon's spirited poem dealing with the legendary history of Britain, and written at Redstone near Arley, within sight of the river's majestic sweep amidst its bordering woods and hills, is by far the most important literary monument of semi-Saxon. And, while the poem as a whole displays a Saxon tenacity of purpose in working out a comprehensive scheme of memorial verse, its more original parts have touches of passion and picturesqueness, as well as of dramatic vivacity, that recall the patriotic fire of the Celtic bards. A hundred and fifty years later the first great period of English literature was inaugurated by another poem of marked originality and power, written under the shadow of the Malvern Hills. The writer of the striking series of allegories known as *Piers Plowman's Visions* was a Shropshire man, and, notwithstanding his occasional visits to London and official employments there, ap-

pears to have spent his best and most productive years on the western border between the Severn and the Malvern Hills. In many points both of substance and form the poem may, it is true, be described as almost typically Saxon. But it has at the same time a power of vivid portraiture, a sense of colour, with an intense and penetrating if not exaggerated feeling for local grievances, which are probably due to the strain of Celtic blood in the writer's veins. Two centuries later, from the same district, from a small town on an affluent of the Severn, a few miles to the west of the river, came the national poet, who not only inherited the patriotic fire and keen sensibility of Layamon and Langland, but who combined in the most perfect form and carried to the highest point of development the best qualities of the two great races represented in the blood and history of the English nation. Mr. J. R. Green, in referring to the moral effects arising from the mixture of races in the Midland district, has noted this fact in one of those sagacious side-glances that make his history so instructive. "It is not without significance," he says, "that the highest type of the race, the one Englishman who has combined in their largest measure the mobility and fancy of the Celt with the depth and energy of the Teutonic temper, was born on the old Welsh and English borderland, in the forest of Arden." And from the purely critical side Mr. Matthew Arnold has clearly brought out the same point. He traces some of the finest qualities of Shakespeare's poetry to the Celtic spirit which touched his imagination as with an enchanter's wand, and thus helped to brighten and enrich the profounder elements of his creative genius.

The history of Warwickshire in Anglo-Saxon times is identified with the kingdom of Mercia, which, under a series of able rulers, was for a time the dominant power of the country. In later times, from its central position, the county was liable to be crossed by military forces if rebellion made head in the north or west, as well as to be traversed and occupied by the rival armies during the periods of civil war. The most important events, indeed, connected with the shire before Shakespeare's time occurred during the two greatest civil conflicts in the earlier national annals—the Barons' War in the thirteenth century, and the Wars of the Roses in the fifteenth. The decisive battles that closed these long and bitter struggles, and thus became turning-points in our constitutional history, were both fought on the borders of Warwickshire,—the battle of Evesham on the south-western and the battle of Bosworth Field on the north-eastern boundary. The great leaders in each conflict—the founder of the Commons House of Parliament and the "setter up and puller down of kings"—were directly connected with Warwickshire. Kenilworth belonged to Simon de Montfort, and its siege and surrender constituted the last act in the Barons' War. During the Wars of the Roses the county was naturally prominent in public affairs, as its local earl, the last and greatest of the lawless, prodigal, and ambitious barons of mediæval times, was for more than twenty years the leading figure in the struggle. But notwithstanding this powerful influence the county was, like the country itself, very much divided in its political sympathies and activities. The weakness and vacillation of Henry VI. had stimulated the rival house of York to assert its claims, and, as the trading and

mercantile classes were always in favour of a strong government, London, with the eastern counties and the chief ports and commercial towns, favoured the house of York. On the other hand, South Wales, some of the Midland and most of the western shires, under the leadership of the Beauforts, and the northern counties, under the leadership of Clifford and Northumberland, supported the house of Lancaster. Political feeling in the Principality itself was a good deal divided. The Duke of York still possessed Ludlow Castle, and, the Welsh of the northern border being devoted to the houses of March and Mortimer, Prince Edward, the young Earl of March, after the defeat and death of his father at Wakefield, was able to rally on the border a "mighty power of marchmen," and, after uniting his forces with those of Warwick, to secure the decisive victory of Towton which placed him securely on the throne. Still during the earlier stages of the struggle the Beauforts, with the Earls of Pembroke, Devon, and Wiltshire, were able to muster in the south and west forces sufficient to keep the Yorkists in check. And when the final struggle came,—when Henry of Richmond landed at Milford Haven,—the Welsh blood in his veins rallied to his standard so powerful a contingent of the southern marchmen that he was able at once to cross the Severn, and, traversing North Warwickshire, to confront the forces of Richard, with the assurance that in the hour of need he would be supported by Stanley and Northumberland. Warwickshire itself was, as already intimated, considerably divided even in the more active stages of the conflict, Coventry being strongly in favour of the Red Rose, while Warwick, under the influence of the earl, was for a while devoted

to the cause of the White Rose. Kenilworth was still held by the house of Lancaster, and Henry VI. at the outset of the conquest had more than once taken refuge there. On the other hand, Edward IV. and Richard III. both visited Warwick, the latter being so interested in the castle that he is said to have laid the foundation of a new and "mighty fayre" tower on the north side, afterwards known as the Bear's Tower. Edward IV., in harmony with his strong instinct for popularity, and command of the arts that secure it, tried to conciliate the people of Coventry by visiting the town and witnessing its celebrated pageants more than once—at Christmas in 1465 and at the festival of St. George in 1474. Although he was accompanied by his queen the efforts to win the town from its attachment to the rival house do not appear to have been very successful. Under Edward's rule the manifestation of active partisanship was naturally in abeyance, and no doubt the feeling may to some extent have declined. Indeed, in the later stages of the struggle Warwickshire, like so many other counties, was comparatively weary and quiescent. When Richard III. advanced to the north the sheriff of the shire had, it is true, in obedience to the royal mandate, levied a force on behalf of the king; but as this force never actually joined the royal standard it is naturally assumed that it was either intercepted by Henry on his march to Bosworth Field or had voluntarily joined him on the eve of battle. In view of the strong Lancastrian sympathies in the north and east of the shire the latter is by far the more probable supposition. In this case, or indeed on either alternative, it may be true, as asserted in the patent of arms subsequently granted to Shakespeare's father, that his

ancestors had fought on behalf of Henry VII. in the great battle that placed the crown on his head. Many families bearing the name of Shakespeare were scattered through Warwickshire in the fifteenth century, and it is therefore not at all unlikely that some of their members had wielded a spear with effect in the battle that, to the immense relief of the country, happily closed the most miserable civil conflict in its annals.

But, whether any of his ancestors fought at Bosworth Field or not, Shakespeare would be sure in his youth to hear, almost at first hand, a multitude of exciting stories and stirring incidents connected with so memorable and far-reaching a victory. After the battle Henry VII. had slept at Coventry, and was entertained by the citizens and presented with handsome gifts. He seems there also to have first exercised his royal power by conferring knighthood on the mayor of the town. The battle was fought only eighty years before Shakespeare's birth, and public events of importance are vividly transmitted by local tradition for more than double that length of time. At this hour the quiet farmsteads of Mid Somerset abound with stories and traditions of Monmouth and his soldiers, and of the events that preceded and followed the battle of Sedgemoor. And a century earlier local traditions possessed still more vitality and power. In the sixteenth century, indeed, the great events of the nation's life, as well as more important local incidents, were popularly preserved and transmitted by means of oral tradition and scenic display. Only a small and cultured class could acquire their knowledge of them through literary chronicles and learned records. The popular mind was of necessity largely fed and stimulated by the spoken narratives

of the rustic festival and the winter fireside. And a quiet settled neighbourhood like Stratford, out of the crush, but near the great centres of national activity, would be peculiarly rich in these stored-up materials of unwritten history. The very fact that within eight miles of Shakespeare's birthplace arose from their cedared slopes the halls and towers of the great earl who for more than a quarter of a century wielded a political and military power mightier than any subject had wielded before, would give the district an exceptional prominence in the national annals, which would be locally reflected in an answering wealth of historic tradition. In Shakespeare's day Warwickshire thus supplied the materials of a liberal elementary training in the heroic annals of the past, and especially in the great events of the recent past that had established the Tudors on the throne, consolidated the permanent interests of the Government and the country, and helped directly to promote the growing unity and strength, prosperity and renown, of the kingdom. The special value of Shakespeare's dramatic interpretation of this period, arising from his early familiarity with the rich and pregnant materials of unwritten history, has recently been insisted on afresh by one of our most careful and learned authorities. In the preface to his work on *The Houses of Lancaster and York*, Mr. James Gairdner says: "For this period of English history we are fortunate in possessing an unrivalled interpreter in our great dramatic poet Shakespeare. A regular sequence of historical plays exhibits to us, not only the general character of each successive reign, but nearly the whole chain of leading events from the days of Richard II. to the death of Richard III. at Bosworth. Following the guidance of such a master

mind, we realise for ourselves the men and actions of the period in a way we cannot do in any other epoch. And this is the more important as the age itself, especially towards the close, is one of the most obscure in English history. During the period of the Wars of the Roses we have, comparatively speaking, very few contemporary narratives of what took place, and anything like a general history of the times was not written till a much later date. But the doings of that stormy age,—the sad calamities endured by kings—the sudden changes of fortune in great men—the glitter of chivalry and the horrors of civil war,—all left a deep impression upon the mind of the nation, which *was kept alive by vivid traditions of the past at the time that our great dramatist wrote*. Hence, notwithstanding the scantiness of records and the meagreness of ancient chronicles, we have singularly little difficulty in understanding the spirit and character of the times." Familiar as he must have been in his youth with the materials that enabled him to interpret so stirring a period, it is not surprising that even amidst the quiet hedgerows and meadows of Stratford, Shakespeare's pulse should have beat high with patriotic enthusiasm, or that when launched on his new career in the metropolis he should have sympathised to the full extent of his larger powers with the glow of loyal feeling that, under Elizabeth's rule, and especially in the conflict with Spain, thrilled the nation's heart with an exulting sense of full political life, realised national power, and gathering European fame.

In the interval that elapsed between the battle of Bosworth Field and the birth of Shakespeare, Warwickshire continued to be visited by the reigning monarch

and members of the royal family. The year after his accession to the crown Henry VIII., with Queen Catherine, visited Coventry in state, and witnessed there a series of magnificent pageants. In 1525 the Princess Mary spent two days at the priory, being entertained with the usual sports and shows, and presented by the citizens on her departure with handsome presents. The year after Shakespeare's birth Queen Elizabeth made a state visit to Coventry, Kenilworth, and Warwick, the young queen being received at every point of her progress with unusually splendid demonstrations of loyalty and devotion. And nine years before Shakespeare's birth King Edward VI., in the last months of his reign, had specially interested himself in the re-establishment by royal charter of the free grammar school of the guild at Stratford, which had been suppressed at the dissolution of religious houses during his father's reign.

The town of Stratford lies on the north bank of the Avon, at a point about midway in its course from its rise in Northamptonshire hills to its junction with the Severn at Tewkesbury. On entering the town, across Sir Hugh Clopton's noble bridge, the road from the south-east fans out in three main directions,—on the right to Warwick and Coventry, on the left to Alcester, while between runs the central street, the modern representative of the old Roman way to Birmingham, Chester, and the north. Further to the left a fourth and less important road leaves the town beyond the church, and, keeping in the main the line of the river, goes to Bidford, Salford Priors, and Evesham. It is a picturesque country road connecting a string of undulating villages and hamlets with Stratford. The

town itself consisted in the sixteenth century of the low gable-roofed wood-and-plaster houses, dotted at intervals along these roads and down the cross streets that connected them with each other and with the river. Most of the houses in Shakespeare's time had gardens at the back, and many at the sides also; and the space between the houses, combined with the unusual width of the streets, gave the town an open cheerful look which enabled it to retain pleasant touches of its earlier rural state. As its prosperity increased the scattered dwellings naturally tended to close up their ranks, and present a more united front of exposed wares and convenient hostelries to the yeomen and graziers, who with their wives and families frequented the place on fair and market days. But in Shakespeare's time the irregular line of gables and porches, of penthouse walls and garden palings, with patches of flowers and overarching foliage between, still varied the view and refreshed the eye in looking down the leading thoroughfares. These thoroughfares took the shape of a central cross, of which Church, Chapel, and High Streets, running in a continuous line north and south, constituted the shaft or stem, while Bridge and Wood Streets, running in another line east and west, were the transverse beam or bar. At the point of intersection stood the High Cross, a solid stone building, with steps below and open arches above, from which public proclamations were made, and, as in London and other large towns, sermons sometimes delivered. The open space around the High Cross was the centre of trade and merchandise on market days, and from the force of custom it naturally became the site on which at a later period the market-house was built. Opposite the High Cross the main road,

carried over Sir Hugh Clopton's arches and along Bridge Street, turns to the left through Henley Street on its way to Henley-in-Arden and the more distant northerly towns. At the western end of Wood Street was a large and open space called Rother Market, whence Rother Street running parallel with High Street led through narrower lanes into the Evesham Road.

This open ground was, as the name indicates, the great cattle market of Stratford, one of the most important features of its industrial history from very early times. In the later Middle Ages most of the wealthier inhabitants were engaged in farming operations, and the growth and prosperity of the place resulted from its position as a market town in the midst of an agricultural and grazing district. In the thirteenth century a number of charters were obtained from the early Plantagenet kings, empowering the town to hold a weekly market and no fewer than five annual fairs, four of which were mainly for cattle. In later times a series of great cattle markets, one for each month in the year, was added to the list. The name of the Stratford cattle market embodies this feature of its history, "rother" being a good Saxon word for horned cattle, a word freely employed in Early English, both alone and in composition. In the sixteenth century it was still in familiar use, not only in literature but in official documents and especially in statutes of the realm. Thus Cowell, in his *Law Dictionary*, under the heading "Rother-beast," explains that "the name comprehended oxen, cows, steers, heifers, and such like horned beasts," and refers to statutes of Elizabeth and James in support of the

usage. And Arthur Golding, in 1567, translates Ovid's lines—

"Mille greges illi totidemque armenta per herbas
Errabant."

"A thousand flocks of sheep,
A thousand herds of *rother-beasts*, he in his fields did keep."

The word seems to have been longer retained and more freely used in the Midland counties than elsewhere, and Shakespeare himself employs it with colloquial precision in the restored line of "Timon of Athens": "It is the pasture lards the rother's sides". Many a time, no doubt, as a boy, during the spring and summer fairs, he had risen with the sun, and, making his way from Henley Street to the bridge, watched the first arrivals of the "large-eyed kine" slowly driven in from the rich pastures of the "Red Horse Valley". There would be some variety and excitement in the spectacle as the droves of meditative oxen were invaded from time to time by groups of Herefordshire cows lowing anxiously after their skittish calves, as well as by the presence and disconcerting activity of still smaller deer. And the boy would be sure to follow the crowding cattle to the Rother Market and observe at leisure the humours of the ploughmen and drovers from the Feldon district, whose heavy intermittent talk would be in perfect keeping with the bovine stolidity of the steers and heifers around them. There was a market-cross at the head of the Rother expanse, and this was the chief gathering place for the cattle-dealers, as the High Cross was the rallying-point of the dealers in corn and country produce. In modern Stratford Rother Market retains its place as the busiest

centre at the annual fairs, during one of which it is still customary to roast an ox in the open street, often amidst a good deal of popular excitement and convivial uproar.

The cross ways going from Rother Street to the river side, which cut the central line, dividing it into three sections, are Ely Street and Sheep Street in a continuous line, and Scholar's Lane and Chapel Lane in another line. They run parallel with the head line of Bridge and Wood Streets, and like them traverse from east to west the northern shaft of the cross that constituted the ground plan of the town. Starting down this line from the market house at the top, the first division, the High Street, is now, as it was in Shakespeare's day, the busiest part for shops and shopping, the solid building at the further corner to the left being the Corn Exchange. At the first corner of the second division, called Chapel Street, stands the town-hall, while at the further corner are the site and railed-in gardens of New Place, the large mansion purchased by Shakespeare in 1597. Opposite New Place, at the corner of the third and last division, known as Church Street, is the grey mass of Gothic buildings belonging to the guild of the Holy Cross, and consisting of the chapel, the hall, the grammar school, and the almshouses of the ancient guild. Turning to the left at the bottom of Church Street, you enter upon what was in Shakespeare's day a well-wooded suburb, with a few good houses scattered among the ancient elms, and surrounded by ornamental gardens and extensive private grounds. In one of these houses, with a sunny expanse of lawn and shrubbery, lived in the early years of the seventeenth century Shakespeare's eldest daughter

Susunna, with her husband, Dr. John Hall; and here in spring mornings and summer afternoons the great poet must have often strolled, either alone or accompanied by his favourite daughter, realising to the full the quiet enjoyment of the sylvan scene and its social surroundings. This pleasant suburb, called then as now Old Town, leads directly to the church of the Holy Trinity, near the river side. The church, a fine specimen of Decorated and Perpendicular Gothic, with a lofty spire, is approached on the northern side through an avenue of limes, and sheltered on the east and south by an irregular but massive group of elms, towering above the churchway path between the transepts, the chancel, and the river. Below the church, on the margin of the river, were the mill, the mill-bridge, and the weir, half hidden by grey willows, green alders, and tall beds of rustling sedge. And, beyond the church, the college, and the line of streets already described, the suburbs stretched away into gardens, orchards, meadows, and cultivated fields, divided by rustic lanes with mossy banks, flowering hedgerows, and luminous vistas of bewildering beauty. These cross and country roads were dotted at intervals with cottage homesteads, isolated farms, and the small groups of both which constituted the villages and hamlets included within the wide sweep of old Stratford parish. Amongst these were the villages and hamlets of Welcombe, Ingon, Drayton, Shottery, Luddington, Little Wilmcote, and Bishopston. The town was thus girdled in the spring by daisied meadows and blossoming orchards, and enriched during the later months by the orange and gold of harvest fields and autumn foliage, mingled with the coral and purple

clusters of elder, hawthorn, and mountain ash, and, around the farms and cottages, with the glow of ripening fruit for the winter's store.

But perhaps the most characteristic feature of the scenery in the neighbourhood of Stratford is to be found in the union of this rich and varied cultivation with picturesque survivals of the primeval forest territory. The low hills that rise at intervals above the well-turned soil still carry on their serrated crests the lingering glories of the ancient woodland. Though the once mighty forest of Arden has disappeared, the after-glow of its sylvan beauty rests on the neighbouring heights formerly enclosed within its ample margin. These traces of the forest wildness and freedom were of course far more striking and abundant in Shakespeare's day than now. At that time many of the farms had only recently been reclaimed from the forest, and most of them still had their bosky acres "of tooth'd briars, sharp furzes, pricking goss and thorns," their broom groves, hazel copses, and outlying patches of unshrubbed down. And the hills that rose above the chief villages of the neighbourhood were still clothed and crowned with the green and mystic mantle of the leafy Arden. But, though much of the ancient woodland has disappeared since Shakespeare's day, many traces of it still remain. Any of the roads out of Stratford will soon bring the pedestrian to some of these picturesque survivals of the old forest wilderness. On the Warwick road, at the distance of about a mile from the town, there are on the left the Welcombe Woods, and just beyond the woods are the well-known Dingles, a belt of straggling ash and hawthorn, winding irregularly through blue-bell depths and briery hollows from the

pathway below to the crest of the hill above; while immediately around rise the Welcombe Hills, from the top of which is obtained the finest local view of Stratford and the adjacent country. Looking south-west, and facing the central line of the town, you see below you, above the mass of roofs, the square tower of the guild chapel, the graceful spire of the more distant church, the sweep of the winding river, and beyond the river the undulating valley of the Red Horse, shut in by the blue range of the Cotswold Hills. A couple of miles to the east of the Welcombe Hills is the village of Snitterfield, where Shakespeare's grandfather, Richard Shakespeare, lived and cultivated to the end of his days the acres around his rustic dwelling. Beyond the village on its western side there is an upland reach of wilderness in the shape of a hill, covered with shrub and copsewood, and known as the Snitterfield Bushes. Here Shakespeare as a boy must have often rambled, enjoying the freedom of the unfenced downs, and enlarging his knowledge of nature's exuberant vitality. On the opposite side of the town, about a mile on the Evesham road, or rather between the Evesham and Alcester roads, lies the hamlet of Shottery, half concealed by ancestral elms and nestling amongst its homesteads fruits and flowers. From one of these homesteads Shakespeare obtained his bride Anne Hathaway. A mile or two on the central road, passing out of the town through Henley Street, is the village of Bearley, and above the village another sweep of wooded upland known as Bearley Bushes. And at various more distant points between these roads the marl and sandstone heights, fringed with woods or covered with wilding growths, still bear eloquent testimony to the

time when Guy of Warwick and his tutor in chivalry, Heraud of Arden, still roamed the forest in search of the wild ox and savage boar that frayed the infrequent travellers and devastated at intervals the slender cultivation of the district. The subtle power of this order of scenery, arising from the union of all that is rich and careful in cultivation with all that is wild and free in natural beauty, is exactly of the kind best fitted to attract and delight imaginative and emotional minds. It possesses the peculiar charm that in character arises from the union of refined culture with the bright and exhilarating spontaneity of a free and generous nature.

On its moral side such scenery has an expanding, illuminating power which links it to the wider and deeper interests of humanity as a whole. Nature seems to put forth her vital energies expressly for the relief of man's estate, appearing as his friend and helper and consoler. Instead of being absorbed in her own inaccessible grandeurs and solitary sublimities, she exerts her benign influences expressly as it were for his good, to cheer and brighten his evanescent days, and beautify his temporary home. Bolder and more rugged landscapes, gloomy glens, and thunder-scarred peaks may excite more passionate feelings, may rouse and strengthen by reaction the individualistic elements of mind and character, and thus produce the hardy, daring type of mountaineer, the intense self-centred and defiant local patriot or hero, the chieftain and his clansmen, *contra mundum*. No doubt, it is also true that the vaster and loftier mountain ranges have a unique power of exciting in susceptible minds the emotions of awe, wonder, and sublimity. But the very power and

permanence of these mighty solitudes, the grandeur and immobility of their measureless strength and imperial repose, dwarf by comparison all merely human interests; and to the meditative mind swept by the spirit of such immensities the moments of our mortal life seem to melt as dewdrops into the silence of their eternal years. The feelings thus excited, being in themselves of the essence of poetry, may indeed find expression in verse and in verse of a noble kind; but the poetry will be lyrical and reflective, not dramatic, or if dramatic in form it will be lyrical in substance. As Mr. Ruskin has pointed out, the overmastering effect of mountain scenery tends to absorb and preoccupy the mind, and thus to disturb the impartial view, the universal vision of nature and human nature as a complex whole, or rather of nature as the theatre and scene of human life, which the dramatist must preserve in order to secure success in his higher work. Mountain scenery is, however, not only rare and exacting in the range and intensity of feeling it excites, but locally remote in its separation from the interests and occupations of men. It is thus removed from the vital element in which the dramatist works, if not in its higher influence antagonistic to that element. Mr. Hamerton, who discusses the question on a wider basis of knowledge and experience than perhaps any living authority except Mr. Ruskin, supports this view. "As a general rule," he says, "I should say there is an antagonism between the love of mountains and the knowledge of mankind, that the lover of mountains will often be satisfied with their appearances of power and passion, their splendour and gloom, their seeming cheerfulness or melancholy, when a mind indifferent to this class of scenery might study the

analogous phases of human character." Where, indeed, the influence of nature is overpowering, as in the East, wonder,—the wonder excited by mere physical vastness, power, and infinitude,—takes the place of intelligent interest in individual life and character.

But the dramatic poet has to deal primarily with human power and passion; and not for him therefore is the life of lonely raptures and awful delights realised by the mountain wanderer or the Alp-inspired bard. His work lies nearer the homes and ways of men, and his choicest scenery will be found in the forms of natural beauty most directly associated with their habitual activities, most completely blended with their more vivid emotional experiences. A wooded undulating country, watered by memorable streams, its ruder features relieved by the graces of cultivation, and its whole circuit rich in historical remains and associations, is, outside the domain of cities, the natural stage and theatre of the dramatist and story-teller. This was the kind of scenery that fascinated Scott's imagination, amidst which he fixed his chosen home, and where he sleeps his last sleep. It is a border country of grey waving hills, divided by streams renowned in song, and enriched by the monuments of the piety, splendour, and martial power of the leaders whose fierce raids and patriotic conflicts filled with romantic tale and minstrelsy the whole district from the Lammermoors to the Cheviots, and from the Leader and the Tweed to the Solway Firth. In earlier times Shakespeare's own district had been virtually a border country also. The mediæval tide of intermittent but savage warfare between the unsubdued Welsh and the Anglo-Normans under the feudal lords of the marches, ebbcd and flowed

across the Severn, inundating at times the whole of Powis-land, and sweeping on to the very verge of Warwickshire. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the policy of intermarriage between their own families and the Welsh princes was tried by the English monarchs; and King John, on betrothing his daughter Joan to the Welsh prince Llewelyn, gave the manor of Bidford, six miles from Stratford-on-Avon, as part of her dower. The fact of this English princess being thus identified with South Warwickshire may help to explain the prevalence of the name Joan in the county; but the early impulse towards the giving of this royal name would no doubt be strengthened by the knowledge that John of Gaunt's daughter, the mother of the great Earl of Warwick, had also borne the favourite local name. Shakespeare himself, it will be remembered, had two sisters of this name, the elder Joan, born some time before him, the firstborn of the family indeed, who died in infancy, and the younger Joan, who survived him. But the local popularity of a name, familiarly associated with the kitchen and the scullery rather than with the court or the palace, is no doubt due to one of the more striking incidents of the long conflict between the English and the Welsh on the western border. As we have seen, during the Barons' War and the Wars of the Roses the western border was the scene of active conflict, each party seeking Welsh support, and each being able in turn to rally a power of hardy marchmen to its banner. And that the insurgent Welsh were not idle during the interval between these civil conflicts we have the emphatic testimony of Glendower:—

“ Three times hath Henry Bolingbrooke made head
Against my power : thrice from the banks of Wye

And sedgy-bottomed Severn have I sent him
Bootless home, and weather-beaten back ".

The Hotspur and Mortimer revolt against Henry IV. well illustrates, indeed, the kind of support which English disaffection found for centuries in the Welsh marches. A rich heritage of stirring border life and heroic martial story was thus transmitted from the stormy ages of faith and feudalism to the more settled Tudor times. Apart from the border warfare there were also the multiplied associations connected with the struggles between the nobles and the crown, and the rise of the Commons as a distinctive power in the country. The whole local record of great names and signal deeds was in Shakespeare's day so far withdrawn into the past and mellowed by secular distance as to be capable of exerting its full enchantment over the feelings and the imagination. The historical associations thus connected with the hills and streams, the abbeys and castles, of Warwickshire added elements of striking moral interest to the natural beauty of the scenery. To the penetrating imagination of poetic natures these elements reflected the continuity of national life as well as the greatness and splendour of the personalities and achievements by which it was developed from age to age. They also helped to kindle within them a genuine enthusiasm for the fortunes and the fame of their native land. And scenery beautiful in itself acquired a tenfold charm from the power it thus possessed of bringing vividly before the mind the wide and moving panorama of the heroic past. The facts sufficiently prove that scenery endowed with this multiplied charm takes, if a calmer, still a deeper and firmer hold of the affections than any isolated and remote natural features, however beautiful and sublime,

have power to do. This general truth is illustrated with even exceptional force in the lives of Scott and Shakespeare. Both were passionately attached to their native district, and the memorable scenes amidst which their early years were passed. So intense was Scott's feeling that he told Washington Irving that if he did not see the grey hills and the heather once a year he thought he should die. And one of the few traditions preserved of Shakespeare is that even in the most active period of his London career he always visited Stratford at least once every year. We know indeed from other sources that during his absence Shakespeare continued to take the liveliest interest in the affairs of his native place, and that, although London was for some years his professional residence, he never ceased to regard Stratford as his home.

Amongst other illustrations of this strong feeling of local attachment that might be given there is one that has recently excited a good deal of attention and is worth noticing in some detail. Mr. Hallam, in a well-known passage, has stated that "no letter of Shakespeare's writing, no record of his conversation, has been preserved". But we certainly have at least one conversation reported at first hand, and it turns directly on the point in question. It relates to a proposal made in 1614 by some of the local proprietors for the enclosure of certain common lands at Welcombe and Old Stratford. The Corporation of Stratford strongly opposed the project on the ground that it would be a hardship to the poorer members of the community, and their clerk, Mr. Thomas Greene, who was related to Shakespeare, was in London about the business in November of the same year. Under date 17th November Greene says, in notes

which still exist: "My cosen Shakespear comyng yesterday to town, I went to see him how he did. He told me that they assured him they ment to inclose no further than to Gospell Bush, and so upp straight (leavyng out part of the Dyngles to the ffield) to the gate in Clopton hedg, and take in Salisburys peece; and that they mean in Aprill to survey the land, and then to gyve satisfaction, and not before; and he and Mr. Hall say they think ther will be nothyng done at all." This proves that the agents of the scheme had seen Shakespeare on the subject, that he had gone carefully into the details of their plan, consulted his son-in-law Dr. John Hall about them, and arrived at the conclusion that for the present they need take no decided action in the matter. There is evidently on Shakespeare's part a strong feeling against the proposed enclosure, and the agents of the scheme had clearly done their best to remove his objections, promising amongst other things that if it went forward he should suffer no pecuniary loss, a promise already confirmed by a legal instrument. But nine months later, when the local proprietors seemed bent on pushing the scheme, Shakespeare takes a more decided stand, and pronounces strongly against the whole business. We have a notice, dated September 1, 1615, to the effect that Mr. Shakespeare had on that day told the agent of the corporation "that he was not able to bear the enclosing of Welcombe". As his proprietary rights and pecuniary interests were not to be affected by the proposed enclosure, this strong expression of feeling must refer to the public advantages of the Welcombe common fields, and especially to what in Scotland would be called their "amenity," the element of value arising from their

freedom and beauty, their local history and associations. Welcombe, as we have seen, was the most picturesque suburb of Stratford. The hills, divided by the leafy Dingles, afforded the finest panoramic view of the whole neighbourhood. On their eastern slope they led to Fulbroke Park, the probable scene of the deer-stealing adventure, and towards the north-west to the village of Snitterfield with its wooded sweep of upland "bushes".

Every acre of the ground was associated with the happiest days of Shakespeare's youth. In his boyish holidays he had repeatedly crossed and recrossed the unfenced fields at the foot of the Welcombe Hills on his way to the rustic scenes and occupations of his uncle Henry's farm in the outlying forest village. He knew by heart every boundary tree and stone and bank, every pond and sheep-pool, every barn and cattle-shed, throughout the whole well-frequented circuit. And in his later years, when after the turmoil and excitement of his London life he came to reside at Stratford, and could visit at leisure the scenes of his youth, it was perfectly natural that he should shrink from the prospect of having these scenes partially destroyed and their associations broken up by the rash hand of needless innovation. In his own emphatic language, "he could not bear the enclosing of Welcombe," and the only authoritative fragment of his conversation preserved to us thus brings vividly out one of the best known and most distinctive features of his personal character and history—his deep and lifelong attachment to his native place. Another illustration of the same feeling, common both to Scott and Shakespeare, is supplied by the prudence and foresight they both displayed in husbanding their early gains in order to

provide, amidst the scenery they loved, a permanent home for themselves and their families. Shakespeare, the more careful and sharp-sighted of the two, ran no such risks and experienced no such reverses of fortune as those which saddened Scott's later days. Both, however, spent the last years of their lives in the home which their energy and affection had provided, and both sleep their last sleep under the changing skies and amidst the fields and streams that gave light and music to their earliest years. Hence, of all great authors, they are the two most habitually thought of in connection with their native haunts and homesteads. Even to his contemporaries Shakespeare was known as the Swan of Avon. The two spots on British ground most completely identified with the noblest energies of genius, consecrated by lifelong associations, and hallowed by sacred dust, are the banks of the Tweed from Abbotsford to Dryburgh Abbey, and the sweep of the Avon from Charlecote Park to Stratford Church. To all lovers of literature, to all whose spirits have been touched to finer issues by its regenerating influence, these spots, and above all the abbey grave and the chancel tomb, are holy ground,—national shrines visited by pilgrims from every land, who breathe with pride and gratitude and affection the household names of Shakespeare and of Scott.

The name Shakespeare is found in the Midland counties two centuries before the birth of the poet, scattered so widely that it is not easy at first sight to fix the locality of its rise or trace the lines of its progress. Several facts, however, would seem to indicate that those who first bore it entered Warwickshire from the north and west, and may therefore have migrated

in early times from the neighbouring marches. The name itself is of course thoroughly English, and it is given by Camden and Verstegan as an illustration of the way in which surnames were fabricated when first introduced into England in the thirteenth century. But it is by no means improbable that some hardy borderers who had fought successfully in the English ranks may have received or assumed a significant and sounding designation that would help to perpetuate the memory of their martial prowess. We have indeed a distinct and authoritative assertion that some of Shakespeare's ancestors had served their country in this way. However this may be, families bearing the name are found during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Arden district, especially at Wroxhall and Rowington,—some being connected with the priory of Wroxhall, while during the fifteenth century the names of more than twenty are enumerated as belonging to the guild of St. Ann, at Knoll near Rowington. In the roll of this guild or college are also found the representatives of some of the best families in the county, such as the Ferrerses of Tamworth and the Clintons of Coleshill. Among the members of the guild the poet's ancestors are to be looked for, and it is not improbable, as Mr. French suggests, that John and Joan Shakespeare, entered on the Knoll register in 1527, may have been the parents of Richard Shakespeare of Snitterfield, whose sons gave each to his children the favourite family names. Richard Shakespeare, the poet's grandfather, occupied a substantial dwelling and cultivated a forest farm at Snitterfield, between three and four miles from Stratford. He was the tenant of Robert Arden of Wilmcote, "a gentleman of worship," who

farmed his own estate, situated a few miles to the west of Snitterfield. Richard Shakespeare was settled at the latter hamlet and doing well as early as 1543, Thomas Atwood of Stratford having in that year bequeathed to him four oxen which were then in his keeping; and he continued to reside there certainly till 1560, and probably till his death. He appears to have had two sons, John and Henry, of whom John, the eldest, early broke through the contracted circle of rustic life at Snitterfield, made his way to Stratford, and established himself as a trader in one of the leading thoroughfares of the town. This movement to the town probably took place in 1551, as in 1552 John Shakespeare is described in an official document as residing in Henley Street, where the poet was subsequently born. As to the precise nature of his occupation, the kind of wares in which he principally dealt, there are various and conflicting statements that have given rise to a good deal of discussion. The earliest official statement on the subject occurs in the register of the bailiff's court for the year 1556. He is there described as a "glover," which, according to the verbal usage of the time, included dealing in skins, as well as in the various leather-made articles of farming gear, such as rough gauntlets and leggings for hedging and ditching, white leather gloves for chopping wood, and the like. But in addition to the trade of glover and fell-monger tradition assigns to John Shakespeare the functions of butcher, wool-stapler, corn-dealer, and timber-merchant. These occupations are not incompatible, and together they represent the main lines some of which at least a young farmer going into the town for trading purposes would be likely to pursue. He would

naturally deal with the things he knew most about, such as corn, wool, timber, skins, and leather-made articles used in farm work—in a word, he would deal in farm conveniences and farm products. In a town that was the centre and chief market of an agricultural and grazing district, and as the member of a family whose wide connections were nearly all engaged in farming operations, his prospects were certainly rather favourable than otherwise. And he soon began to turn his country connection to account. There is distinct evidence that he early dealt in corn and wood as well as gloves and leather, for in 1556 he sues a neighbour for eighteen quarters of barley, and a few years later is paid three shillings by the corporation for a load of timber.

The poet's father was evidently a man of energy, ambition, and public spirit, with the knowledge and ability requisite for pushing his fortune with fair success in his new career. His youthful vigour and intelligence soon told in his favour, and in a short time we find him taking an active part in public affairs. He made way so rapidly indeed amongst his fellow-townsmen, that within five years after entering Stratford he is recognised as a fitting recipient of municipal honours; and his official appointments steadily rise in dignity and value through the various gradations of leet-juror, ale-taster, constable, affeeror, burgess, chamberlain, and alderman, until in 1568 he gains the most distinguished post of official dignity, that of high-bailiff or mayor of the town. Within twenty years after starting in business in Henley Street he thus rises to the highest place in the direction of municipal affairs, presiding as their head over the deliberations of his

fellow-aldermen and burgesses, and as chief magistrate over the local court of record. Three years later, in 1571, he was again elected as chief alderman. There is ample evidence, too, that during these years he advanced in material prosperity as well as in municipal dignities and honours. As early as 1556 he had means at his command which enabled him to purchase two houses in the town, one in Henley Street with a considerable garden, and another in Greenhill Street with a garden and croft attached to it. In the following year he married an heiress of gentle birth, Mary Arden of the Asbies, who had recently inherited under her father's will a substantial sum of ready money, an estate at Wilmcote, consisting of nearly sixty acres of land with two or three houses, and a reversionary interest in houses and lands at Snitterfield, including the farm tenanted by Richard Shakespeare, her husband's father. Being now a landed proprietor and a man of rising position and influence, John Shakespeare would be able to extend his business operations, and it is clear that he did so, though whether always with due prudence and foresight may be fairly questioned. To a man of his sanguine and somewhat impetuous temper the sudden increase of wealth was probably by no means an unmixed good. But for some years, at all events, he was able to maintain his more prosperous state, and his new ventures appear for a time to have turned out well. He is designated in official documents as yeoman, freeholder, and gentleman, and has the epithet "master" prefixed to his name; this, being equivalent to esquire, was rarely used except in relation to men of means and station, possessing landed property of their own. In a note to another official

document it is stated that about the time of his becoming chief magistrate of Stratford John Shakespeare had "lands and tenements of good worth and substance," estimated in value at £500; and though there may be some exaggeration in this estimate his property from various sources must have been worth nearly that sum. And in 1575 he increased the total amount by purchasing two houses in Henley Street, the two that still remain identified with the name and are consecrated by tradition as the birthplace of the poet. But this was his last purchase, the tide of his hitherto prosperous fortunes being but too clearly already on the turn. Having passed the highest point of social and commercial success, he was now facing the downward slope, and the descent once begun was for some years continuous, and at times alarmingly and almost inscrutably rapid.

It seems clear indeed from the facts of the case that, notwithstanding John Shakespeare's intelligence, activity, and early success, there was some defect of character which introduced an element of instability into his career, and in the end very much neutralised the working of his nobler powers. Faintly discernible perhaps from the first, and overpowered only for a time by the access of prosperity that followed his fortunate marriage, this vital flaw ultimately produced its natural fruit in the serious embarrassments that clouded his later years. The precise nature of the defect can only be indicated in general terms, but it seems to have consisted very much in a want of measure and balance, of adequate care and foresight, in his business dealings and calculations. He seems to have possessed the eager sanguine temperament which, absorbed in the

immediate object of pursuit, overlooks difficulties and neglects the wider considerations on which lasting success depends. Even in his early years at Stratford there are signs of this ardent, impatient, somewhat unheedful temper. He is not only active and pushing, but too restless and excitable to pay proper attention to necessary details, or discharge with punctuality the minor duties of his position. The first recorded fact in his local history illustrates this feature of his character. In April, 1552, John Shakespeare is fined twelve pence, equal to between eight and ten shillings of our English money now, for not removing the heap of household dirt and refuse that had accumulated in front of his own door. Another illustration of his want of thorough method and system in the management of his affairs is supplied by the fact that in the years 1556-57 he allowed himself to be sued in the bailiff's court for comparatively small debts. This could not have arisen from any want of means, as during the same period, in October, 1556, he made the purchase already referred to of two houses with extensive gardens. The actions for debt must therefore have been the result of negligence or temper on John Shakespeare's part, and either alternative tells almost equally against his habits of business coolness and regularity. Another illustration of his restless, ill-considered, and unbalanced energy may be found in the number and variety of occupations which he seems to have added to his early trade of glover and leather-dealer. As his prospects improved he appears to have seized on fresh branches of business, until he had included within his grasp the whole circle of agricultural products that could in any way be brought to market. It would seem also that he added

farming, to a not inconsiderable extent, to his expanding retail business in Stratford. But it is equally clear that he lacked the orderly method, the comprehensive outlook, and the vigilant care for details essential for holding well in hand the threads of so complicated a commercial web. Other disturbing forces may probably be discovered in the pride and ambition, the love of social excitement and display, which appears to be among the ground notes of John Shakespeare's character so far as it is revealed to us in the few facts of his history. His strong social feeling and love of pleasurable excitement are illustrated by the fact that during the year of his mayoralty he brought companies of players into the town, and inaugurated dramatic performances in the guild hall. It is during the year of his filling the post of high-bailiff that we first hear of stage plays at Stratford, and the players must have visited the town, if not, as is most likely, at the invitation and desire of the poet's father, at least with his sanction and support. In such cases the players could not act at all without the permission of the mayor and council, and their first performance was usually a free entertainment, patronised and paid for by the corporation, and called the mayor's play. In all this John Shakespeare took the initiative, and in so doing probably helped to decide the future career of his son. The notes of personal pride and social ambition are equally apparent. It is on record, for example, that soon after reaching the highest post of municipal distinction the poet's father applied to the Heralds' College for a grant of arms. This application was not at the time successful, but it seems to have been so far seriously entertained that official inquiries were made

into the family history and social standing of the Shakespeares. But the remarkable fact is that such an application should have been made at all by a Stratford burgess whose position and prospects were so unstable and precarious as the events of the next few years showed those of John Shakespeare to be. At the time of the application his increasing family must have enlarged his household expenses; while his official position, combined with his open and generous nature, his love of social sympathy, distinction, and support, would probably have led him into habits of free-handed hospitality and inconsiderate expenditure. All this must have helped to introduce a scale of lavish domestic outlay that would tend directly to hasten the financial collapse in his affairs that speedily followed. And on finding things going against him John Shakespeare was just the man to discount his available resources, and, as the pressure increased, mortgage his future and adopt any possible expedient for maintaining the increased port and social consequence he had imprudently assumed.

This seems to have been the course actually pursued when pecuniary difficulties arose. During the three years that elapsed after his last purchase of house property his affairs became so seriously embarrassed that it was found necessary, if not to sacrifice, at least to jeopardise the most cherished future of the family in order to meet the exigencies of the moment. In 1578 John and Mary Shakespeare mortgaged for forty pounds their most considerable piece of landed property, the estate of the Asbies. The mortgagee was a family connection of their own, Edmund Lambert, who had married Mary Shakespeare's sister Joan. The

subsequent history of this transaction shows how bitter must have been the need that induced the Shakespeares to surrender, even for a time, their full control over the ancestral estate. The next year, however, the pressure, instead of being relieved by the sacrifice, had become still more urgent, and the only outlying property that remained to meet it was the reversionary interest in the Snitterfield estate. Under a family settlement Mary Shakespeare, on the death of her stepmother, would come into the possession of houses and land at Snitterfield almost equal in value to the Asbies estate. But in 1579 the Shakespeares found it necessary to dispose altogether of this reversionary interest. In that year it was sold to Robert Webb for the sum of forty pounds. The buyer was a nephew of Mary Shakespeare, being the son of Alexander Webb, who had married her sister Margaret. In thus applying to relatives or family connections in their need, and disposing of their property to them, the Shakespeares may have hoped it would be more easily regained should times of prosperity return. The sacrifice of the remaining interests in the Snitterfield property afforded, however, only a temporary relief, quite insufficient to remove the accumulating burden of debt and difficulty which now weighed the Shakespeares down. The notes of the proceedings of the Stratford Corporation and of the local court of record sufficiently show that John Shakespeare's adverse fortune continued through a series of years, and they also enable us in part to understand how he bore himself under the changes in his social position that followed. These changes begin in the critical year 1578. In January of that year, when his brother-aldermen were called upon to pay a

considerable sum each as a contribution to the military equipment to be provided by the town, John Shakespeare is so far relieved that only one half the amount is required from him. Later in the year we find him wholly exempted from the weekly tax paid by his fellow-aldermen for the relief of the poor. In the spring of the following year, on a further tax for military purposes being laid on the town, he is unable to contribute anything, and is accordingly reported as a defaulter. A few years later, in an action for a debt, a verdict is recorded against him, with the official report that he had no goods on which distraint could be made. About the same time he appears to have been under some restraint, if not actually imprisoned for debt. And as late as 1592 it is officially stated, as a result of an inquiry into the number who fail to attend the church service once a month according to the statutory requirement, that John Shakespeare with some others, two of whom, curiously enough, are named Fluellen and Bardolph, "come not to church for fear of process for debt". In the year 1586 another alderman had at length been chosen in his place, the reason given being expressly because "John Shakespeare doth not come to the halles when they are warned, nor hath not done for a long time".

From this brief official record it would seem that under his reverse of fortune he was treated with marked sympathy and consideration by his fellow-townsmen. For at least seven years after his troubles first began his fellow-burgesses persist in keeping his name in its place of honour on their roll, partly no doubt as a mark of respect for his character and past services, and partly it may be in the hope that his


fortunes might improve and prosperous days return. And, when at length he is superseded by the appointment of another in his place, this is done, not on the ground of his reduced circumstances, but simply because he voluntarily absents himself from the council, never attends its meetings or takes any part in its affairs. This is a noteworthy fact illustrating still further John Shakespeare's character. The statement clearly indicates the kind of moral collapse that had followed the continuous pressure of material reverses. The eager sanguine nature that had so genially expanded in prosperity was, it is clear, sorely chilled and depressed by adversity. He abandons the usual places of resort, withdraws himself from the meetings of the corporation, and ceases to associate with his fellow-burgesses. And, what is perhaps still more noticeable, he gives up attending church, and no longer even worships with his fellow-townsmen. All this is the more significant because his circumstances, though seriously embarrassed, and for some years much reduced, were never so desperate as to compel him to part with his freehold property in Henley Street. In the darkest hours of his clouded fortune he still retained the now world-famous houses associated with the poet's birth and early years. There was no adequate reason therefore why John Shakespeare should have so completely forsaken the usual haunts and regular assemblies of his fellow-townsmen and friends. But it seems clear, as already intimated, that, while gifted with a good deal of native energy and intelligence, and possessing a temper that was proud, sensitive, and even passionate, John Shakespeare lacked the kind of fortitude and moral courage which enables men to

meet serious reverses of fortune with dignity and reserve, if not with cheerfulness and hope. With the instinct of a wounded animal he seems to have left the prosperous herd and retired apart to bear his pain and loss in solitude and alone. Nor apparently did he hold up his head again until the efficient support of his prosperous son enabled him to take active measures for the recovery of his alienated estate and lost position in the town. By the middle of the last decade of the sixteenth century the poet's success in his profession was thoroughly assured, and he was on the high road to wealth and fame. As actor, dramatist, and probably also as sharer in the Blackfriars theatre, he was in the receipt of a large income, and according to tradition received a considerable sum from the young Earl of Southampton, to whom his poems were dedicated. The son was now therefore as able as he had always been willing to help his father to regain the position of comfort and dignity he had formerly occupied. We find accordingly that in 1597 John and Mary Shakespeare filed a bill in Chancery against John Lambert for the recovery of the Asbies estate, which had been mortgaged to his father nearly twenty years before. There had indeed been some movement in the matter ten years earlier, on the death of Edmund Lambert, the mortgagee. His son John being apparently anxious to settle the dispute, it was proposed that he should pay an additional sum of twenty pounds in order to convert the mortgage into a sale, and that he should then receive from the Shakespeares an absolute title to the estate. The arrangement was not, however, carried out; and in 1589 John Shakespeare brought a bill of complaint against Lambert in the Court of

Queen's Bench. Nothing further, however, seems to have been done, probably because Lambert may have felt that in the low state of the Shakespeares' fortune the action could not be pressed. In 1597, however, there was a change in the relative position of the litigants, John Shakespeare having now the purse of his son at his command, and a bill in Chancery was accordingly filed against John Lambert. The plea in support of the Shakespeares' claim was that the original conditions of the mortgage had been fulfilled, the money in discharge having been offered to Edmund Lambert at the proper date, but refused by him on the ground that other sums were owing which must also be repaid at the same time. To this plea John Lambert replied, and there is a still further "replication" on the part of the Shakespeares. How the matter was eventually decided is not known, no decree of the court in the case having been discovered. But the probabilities are that it was settled out of court, and, as the estate did not return to the Shakespeares, probably on the basis of the proposal already made,—that of the payment of an additional sum by John Lambert. About the same date, or rather earlier, in 1596, John Shakespeare also renewed his application to the Heralds' College for a grant of arms, and this time with success. The grant was made on the ground that the history and position of the Shakespeare and Arden families fully entitled the applicant to receive coat armour. There can be no doubt that the means required for supporting these applications were supplied by the poet, and he would be well rewarded by the knowledge that in the evening of his days his father had at length realised the desire of his heart, being officially recognised as a "gentle-

man of worship". And, what would now perhaps please his father still better, he would be able to hand on the distinction to his son, whose profession prevented him at the time from gaining it on his own account. John Shakespeare died in 1601, having through the affectionate care of his son spent the last years of his life in the ease and comfort befitting one who had not only been a prosperous burgess, but chief alderman and mayor of Stratford.

Of Mary Arden, the poet's mother, we know little, hardly anything directly indeed; but the little known is wholly in her favour. From the provisions of her father's will it is clear that of his seven daughters she was his favourite; and the links of evidence are now complete connecting her father Robert Arden with the great Warwickshire family of Arden, whose members had more than once filled the posts of high-sheriff and lord-lieutenant of the county. She was thus descended from an old county family, the oldest in Warwickshire, and had inherited the traditions of gentle birth and good breeding. Her ancestors are traced back, not only to Norman, but to Anglo-Saxon times, Alwin, an early representative of the family, and himself connected with the royal house of Athelstane, having been *vice-comes* or sheriff of Warwickshire in the time of Edward the Confessor. His son Turchill retained his extensive possessions under the Conqueror; and, when they were divided on the marriage of his daughter Margaret to a Norman noble created by William Rufus Earl of Warwick, Turchill betook himself to his numerous lordships in the Arden district of the county, and assumed the name of De Ardern or Arden. His descendants, who retained the name, multiplied in the



shire, and were united in marriage from time to time with the best Norman blood of the kingdom. The family of Arden thus represented the union, under somewhat rare conditions of original distinction and equality, of the two great race elements that have gone to the making of the typical modern Englishman. The immediate ancestors of Mary Shakespeare were the Ardens of Parkhall, near Aston in the north-western part of the shire. During the Wars of the Roses Robert Arden of Parkhall, being at the outset of the quarrel a devoted Yorkist, was seized by the Lancastrians, attached for high treason, and executed at Ludlow in 1452. He left an only son, Walter Arden, who was restored by Edward IV. to his position in the country, and received back his hereditary lordships and lands. At his death in 1502 he was buried with great state in Aston church, where three separate monuments were erected to his memory. He had married Eleanor, second daughter of John Hampden of Bucks, and by her had eight children, six sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Sir John Arden of Parkhall, having been for some years esquire of the body of Henry VII., was knighted and rewarded by that monarch. Sir John was the great-uncle of Mary Shakespeare,—his brother Thomas, the second son of Walter Arden, being her grandfather. Thomas Arden is found residing at Aston Cantlowe during the first half of the sixteenth century, and in the year 1501 he united with his son Robert Arden, Mary Shakespeare's father, in the purchase of the Snitterfield estate. Mary Shakespeare was thus directly connected by birth and lineage with those who had taken, and were to take, a foremost part in the great conflicts which constitute turning-points in the

history of the country. On her father's side she was related to Robert Arden, who in the fifteenth century lost his life while engaged in rallying local forces on behalf of the White Rose, and on her mother's side to John Hampden, who took a still more distinguished part in the momentous civil struggles of the seventeenth century.

A very needless and abortive attempt has been made to call in question Robert Arden's social and family position on the ground that in a contemporary deed he is called a husbandman (*agricola*),—the assumption being that a husbandman is simply a farm-labourer. But the term husbandman was often used in Shakespeare's day to designate a landed proprietor who farmed one of his own estates. The fact of his being spoken of in official documents as a husbandman does not therefore in the least affect Robert Arden's social position, or his relation to the great house of Arden, which is now established on the clearest evidence. He was, however, a younger member of the house, and would naturally share in the diminished fortune and obscurer career of such a position. But, even as a cadet of so old and distinguished a family, he would tenaciously preserve the generous traditions of birth and breeding he had inherited. Mary Arden was thus a gentlewoman in the truest sense of the term, and she would bring into her husband's household elements of character and culture that would be of priceless value to the family, and especially to the eldest son, who naturally had the first place in her care and love. A good mother is to an imaginative boy his earliest ideal of womanhood, and in her for him are gathered up, in all their vital fulness, the tenderness, sympathy, and

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truth, the infinite love, patient watchfulness, and self-abnegation of the whole sex. And the experience of his mother's bearing and example during the vicissitudes of their home life must have been for the future dramatist a vivid revelation of the more sprightly and gracious, as well as of the profounder elements, of female character. In the earlier and prosperous days at Stratford, when all within the home circle was bright and happy, and in her intercourse with her boy Mary Shakespeare could freely unfold the attractive qualities that had so endeared her to her father's heart, the delightful image of the young mother would melt unconsciously into the boy's mind, fill his imagination, and become a store-house whence in after years he would draw some of the finest lines in his matchless portraiture of women. In the darker days that followed he would learn something of the vast possibilities of suffering, personal and sympathetic, belonging to a deep and sensitive nature, and as the troubles made head he would gain some insight into the quiet courage and self-possession, the unwearied fortitude, sweetness, and dignity which such a nature reveals when stirred to its depths by adversity, and rallying all its resources to meet the inevitable storms of fate. These storms were not simply the ever-deepening pecuniary embarrassments and consequent loss of social position. In the very crisis of the troubles, in the spring of 1579, death entered the straitened household, carrying off Anne, the younger of the only two remaining daughters of John and Mary Shakespeare. A characteristic trait of the father's grief and pride is afforded by the entry in the church books that a somewhat excessive sum was paid on this occasion for the tolling of the bell. Even with

ruin staring him in the face John Shakespeare would forego no point of customary respect nor abate one jot of the ceremonial usage proper to the family of an eminent burgess, although the observance might involve a very needless outlay. In passing through these chequered domestic scenes and vividly realising the alternations of grief and hope, the eldest son, even in his early years, would gain a fund of memorable experiences. From his native sensibility and strong family affection he would passionately sympathise with his parents in their apparently hopeless struggle against the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Above all he would cherish the memory of his mother's noble bearing alike under serene and clouded skies, and learn to estimate at their true worth the refined strength of inherited courage, the dignified grace and silent helpfulness of inherited courtesy and genuine kindness of heart. These recollections were vitalised in the sprightly intelligence, quick sympathy, and loving truthfulness belonging to the female characters of his early comedies, as well as in the profounder notes of womanly grief and suffering, struck with so sure a hand and with such depth and intensity of tone, in the early tragedies.


But in addition to her constant influence and example the poet was probably indebted to his mother for certain elements of his own mind and character directly inherited from her. This position may be maintained without accepting the vague and comparatively empty dictum that Shakespeare derived his genius from his mother, as many eminent men are loosely said to have done. The sacred gift of genius has ever been, and perhaps always will be, inexplicable. No

analysis, however complete, of the forces acting on the individual mind can avail to extract this vital secret. The elements of race, country, parentage, and education, though all powerful factors in its development, fail adequately to account for the mystery involved in pre-eminent poetical genius. Like the unseen wind from heaven it bloweth where it listeth, and the inspired voice is gladly heard of men, but none can tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. While, however, genius is thus without ancestry or lineage, there are elements of character and qualities of mind that, like the features of the countenance and the lines of the bodily frame, appear to be clearly transmissible from parent to child. Shakespeare not unfrequently recognises this general truth, especially in relation to moral qualities; and it is mainly qualities of this kind that he himself appears to have inherited from his gently born and nurtured mother, Mary Arden of the Asbies. At least it is hardly fanciful to say that in the life and character of the poet we may trace elements of higher feeling and conduct derived from the hereditary culture and courtesy, the social insight and refinement, of the Ardens. Amongst such elements may be reckoned his strong sense of independence and self-respect, his delicate feeling of honour, his habitual consideration for others, and, above all perhaps, his deep instinctive regard for all family interests and relationships, for everything indeed connected with family character and position. The two epithets which those who knew Shakespeare personally most habitually applied to him appear to embody some of these characteristics. They unite in describing him as "gentle" and "honest" in character, and of an open and free, a frank and gener-

ous disposition. The epithet "gentle" may be taken to represent the innate courtesy, the delicate consideration for the feelings of others, which belongs, in a marked degree to the best representatives of gentle birth, although happily it is by no means confined to them. The second epithet, "honest," which in the usage of the time meant honourable, may be taken to express the high spirit of independence and self-respect which carefully respects the just claims and rights of others. One point of the truest gentle breeding, which, if not inherited from his mother, must have been derived from her teaching and example, is the cardinal maxim, which Shakespeare seems to have faithfully observed, as to nice exactness in money matters—the maxim not lightly to incur pecuniary obligations, and if incurred to meet them with scrupulous precision and punctuality. This he could not have learnt from his father, who, though an honest man enough, was too eager and careless to be very particular on the point. Indeed, carelessness in money matters seems rather to have belonged to the Snitterfield family, the poet's uncle Henry having been often in the courts for debt, and, as we have seen, this was true of his father also. But, while his father was often prosecuted for debt, no trace of any such action against the poet himself, for any amount however small, has been discovered. He sued others for money due to him and at times for sums comparatively small, but he never appears as a debtor himself. Indeed, his whole life contradicts the supposition that he would ever have rendered himself liable to such a humiliation. The family troubles must have very early developed and strengthened the high feeling of honour on this vital point

he had inherited. He must obviously have taken to heart the lesson his father's imprudence could hardly fail to impress on a mind so capacious and reflective. John Shakespeare was no doubt a warm-hearted lovable man, who would carry the sympathy and affection of his family with him through all his troubles ; but his eldest son, who early understood the secret springs as well as the open issues of life, must have realised vividly the rock on which their domestic prosperity had been wrecked, and before he left home he had evidently formed an invincible resolution to avoid it at all hazards. This helps to explain what has often excited surprise in relation to his future career—his business industry, financial skill, and steady progress to what may be called worldly success. Few things are more remarkable in Shakespeare's personal history than the resolute spirit of independence he seems to have displayed from the moment he left his straitened household to seek his fortunes in the world to the time when he returned to live at Stratford as a man of wealth and position in the town. While many of his fellow-dramatists were spendthrifts, in constant difficulties, leading disorderly lives, and sinking into unhonoured graves, he must have husbanded his early resources with a rare amount of quiet firmness and self-control. Chettle's testimony as to Shakespeare's character and standing during his first years in London is decisive on this head. Having published a posthumous work by Greene, in which Marlowe and Shakespeare were somewhat sharply referred to, Chettle expressed his regret in a preface to a work of his own issued a few months later, in December, 1592 ; he intimates that at the time of publishing Greene's

Groatsworth of Wit he knew neither Marlowe nor Shakespeare, and that he does not care to become acquainted with the former. But having made Shakespeare's acquaintance in the interval he expresses his regret that he should, even as editor, have published a word to his disparagement, adding this remarkable testimony: "Because myself have seen his demeanour, no less civil than he excellent in the qualities he professes; besides, divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing, which approves his art". So that Shakespeare, during his earliest and most anxious years in London, had not only kept himself out of debt and difficulty, but had established a reputation of strictly honourable conduct, "divers of worship," i.e., men of position and authority entitled to speak on such a point, "having reported his uprightness of dealing, which argued his honesty". Now, considering the poet's associates, occupations, and surroundings, this is significant testimony, and conclusively proves that, although fond of social life and its enjoyments, and without a touch of harshness or severity in his temper, he yet held himself thoroughly in hand, that amidst the ocean of new experiences and desires on which he was suddenly launched he never abandoned the helm, never lost command over his course, never sacrificed the larger interests of the future to the clamorous or excessive demands of the hour. And this no doubt indicates the direction in which he was most indebted to his mother. From his father he might have derived ambitious desires, energetic impulses and an excitable temper capable of rushing to the verge of passionate excess; but, if so, it



is clear that he inherited from his mother the firmness of nerve and fibre as well as the ethical strength required for regulating these violent and explosive elements. If he received as a paternal heritage a very tempest and whirlwind of passion, the maternal gift of temperance and measure would help to give it smoothness and finish in the working, would supply in some degree at least the power of concentration and self-control indispensable for moulding the extremes of exuberant sensibility and passionate impulse into forms of intense and varied dramatic portraiture; and of course all the finer and regulative elements of character and disposition derived from the spindle side of the house would, throughout the poet's early years, be strengthened and developed by his mother's constant presence, influence, and example.

John and Mary Shakespeare had eight children, four sons and four daughters. Of the latter, two, the first Joan and Margaret, died in infancy, before the birth of the poet, and a third, Anne, in early childhood. In addition to the poet, three sons, Gilbert, Richard, and Edmund, and one daughter, the second Joan, lived to maturity and will be referred to again. William Shakespeare was christened in Stratford church on 26th April, 1564, having most probably been born, according to tradition, on the 23rd. In July of the same year the town was visited by a severe outbreak of the plague, which in the course of a few months carried off one-sixth of the inhabitants. Fortunately, however, the family of the Shakespeares wholly escaped the contagion, their exemption being probably due to the fact that they lived in the healthiest part of the town, away from the river side, on a dry and porous

soil. At the back of Henley Street, indeed, were the gravel pits of the guild, which were in frequent use for repairing the inundated pathways near the river after its periodical overflows. For two years and a half William, their first-born son, remained the only child of his parents, and all his mother's love and care would naturally be lavished upon him. A special bond would in this way be established between mother and child, and, his father's affairs being at the time in a highly prosperous state, Mary Shakespeare would see to it that the boy had all the pleasures and advantages suitable to his age, and which the family of a foremost Stratford burgess could easily command. Healthy outdoor enjoyment is not the least valuable part of a boy's education, and the chief recreations available for the future dramatist in those early years would be the sports and pastimes, the recurring festivals, spectacles and festivities, of the town and neighbourhood, especially the varying round of rural occupations and the celebration in the forest farms and villages of the chief incidents of the agricultural year. Seed time and harvest, summer and winter, each brought its own group of picturesque merry-makings, including some more important festivals that evoked a good deal of rustic pride, enthusiasm, and display. There were, during these years, at least three of the forest farms where the poet's parents would be always welcome, and where the boy must have spent many a happy day amidst the freedom and delights of outdoor country life. At Snitterfield his grandfather would be proud enough of the curly-headed youngster with the fine hazel eyes, and his uncle Henry would be charmed at the boy's interest in all he saw and heard as he trotted with him through the

byres and barns, the poultry yard and steading, or, from a safe nook on the bushy margin of the pool, enjoyed the fun and excitement of sheep-washing, or later on watched the mysteries of the shearing and saw the heavy fleece fall from the sides of the palpitating victim before the sure and rapid furrowing of the shears. He would no doubt also be present at the shearing feast, and see the queen of the festival receive her rustic guests and distribute amongst them her floral gifts. At Wilmcote, in the solid oak-timbered dwelling of the Asbies, with its well-stocked garden and orchard, the boy would be received with cordial hospitality, as well as with the attention and respect due to his parents as the proprietors and to himself as the heir of the maternal estate. At Shottery the welcome of the Shakespeares would not be less cordial or friendly, as there is evidence to show that as early as 1566 the families were known to each other, John Shakespeare having in that year rendered Richard Hathaway an important personal service. Here the poet met his future bride, Anne Hathaway, in all the charm of her sunny girlhood, and they may be said to have grown up together, except that from the difference of their ages she would reach early womanhood while he was yet a stripling. In his later youthful years he would thus be far more frequently at the Hathaway farm than at Snitterfield or the Asbies. There were, however, family connections of the Shakespeares occupying farms further afield,—Hills and Webbs at Bearley and Lamberts at Barton-on-the-Heath. There was thus an exceptionally wide circle of country life open to the poet during his growing years. And in those years he must have repeatedly gone the whole picturesque round with


the fresh senses and eager feeling, the observant eye and open mind, that left every detail, from the scarlet hips by the wayside to the proud tops of the eastern pines, imprinted indelibly upon his heart and brain. Hence the apt and vivid references to the scenes and scenery of his youth, the intense and penetrating glances at the most vital aspects as well as the minutest beauties of nature, with which his dramas abound. These glances are so penetrating, the result of such intimate knowledge and enjoyment, that they often seem to reveal in a moment, and by a single touch as it were, all the loveliness and charm of the objects thus rapidly flashed on the inward eye. In relation to the scenes of his youth, what fresh and delightful hours at the farms are reflected in the full summer beauty and motley humours of a sheep-shearing festival in the "Winter's Tale"; in the autumn glow of the "sun-burnt sicklemen and sedge-crowned nymphs" of the masque in the "Tempest"; and in the vivid pictures of rural sights and sounds in spring and winter so musically rendered in the owl and cuckoo songs of "Love's Labour's Lost"! But, in addition to the festivities and merry-makings of the forest farms, it is clear that, in his early years, the poet had some experience of country sports proper, such as hunting, hawking, coursing, wild-duck shooting, and the like. Many of these sports were pursued by the local gentry and the yeomen together; and the poet, as the son of a well-connected burgess of Stratford, who had recently been mayor of the town and possessed estates in the county, would be well entitled to share in them, while his handsome presence and courteous bearing would be likely to ensure him a hearty welcome. If any of the stiffer local magnates looked

coldly upon the high-spirited youth, or resented in any way his presence amongst them, their conduct would be likely enough to provoke the kind of sportive retaliations that might naturally culminate in the deer-stealing adventure. However this may be, it is clear from internal evidence that the poet was practically familiar with the field sports of his day.

In the town the chief holiday spectacles and entertainments were those connected with the Christmas, New Year, and Easter festivals, the May-day rites and games, the pageants of delight of Whitsuntide, the beating of the bounds during Rogation week, and the occasional representation of mysteries, moralities, and stage-plays. In relation to the main bent of the poet's mind, and the future development of his powers, the latter constituted probably the most important educational influence and stimulus which the social activities and public entertainments of the place could have supplied. Most of these recurring celebrations involved, it is true, a dramatic element,—some hero or exploit, some emblem or allegory, being represented by means of costumed personations, pantomime, and dumb show, while in many cases songs, dances, and brief dialogues were interposed as part of a performance. There were masques and morris-dancing on May-day, as well as mummers and waits at Christmas. In a number of towns and villages the exploits of Robin Hood and his associates were also celebrated on May-day, often amidst a picturesque confusion of floral emblems and forestry devices. In Shakespeare's time the May-day rites and games thus included a variety of elements charged with legendary, historical, and emblematical significance. But, notwithstanding this mixture of

festive elements, the celebration as a whole retained its leading character and purpose. It was still the spontaneous meeting of town and country to welcome the fresh beauty of the spring, the welcome being reflected in the open spaces of the sports by tall painted masts decked with garlands, streamers, and flowery crowns, and in the public thoroughfares by the leafy screens and arches, the bright diffused blossoms and fragrant spoils brought from the forest by rejoicing youths and maidens at the dawn. May-day was thus well fitted to be used, as it often is by Shakespeare, as the comprehensive symbol of all that is delightful and exhilarating in the renewed life and vernal freshness of the opening year.


After May-day, Whitsuntide was at Stratford perhaps the most important season of festive pageantry and scenic display. In addition to the procession of the guild and trades and the usual holiday ales and sports, it involved a distinct and somewhat noteworthy element of dramatic representation. And, as in the case of the regular stage-plays, the high-bailiff and council appear to have patronised and supported the performances. We find in the chamberlain's accounts entries of sums paid "for exhibiting a pastyme at Whitsuntide". Shakespeare himself refers to these dramatic features of the celebration, and in a manner that almost suggests he may in his youth have taken part in them. However this may be, the popular celebrations of Shakespeare's youth must have supplied a kind of training in the simpler forms of poetry and dramatic art, and have afforded some scope for the early exercise of his own powers in both directions. This view is indirectly confirmed by a passage in the



early scenes of the *Return from Parnassus*, where the academic speakers sneer at the poets who come up from the country without any university training. The sneer is evidently the more bitter as it implies that some of these poets had been successful,—more successful than the college-bred wits. The academic critics suggest that the nurseries of these poets were the country ale-house and the country green,—the special stimulus to their powers being the May-day celebrations, the morris-dances, the hobby-horse and the like.

But the moralities, interludes, and stage-plays proper afforded the most direct and varied dramatic instruction available in Shakespeare's youth. The earliest popular form of the drama was the mystery or miracle play, dealing in the main with Biblical subjects; and, Coventry being one of the chief centres for the production and exhibition of the mysteries, Shakespeare had ample opportunities of becoming well acquainted with them. Some of the acting companies formed from the numerous trade guilds of the "shire-town" were moreover in the habit of visiting the neighbouring cities for the purpose of exhibiting their plays and pageants. There is evidence of their having performed at Leicester and Bristol in Shakespeare's youth, and on returning from the latter city they would most probably have stopped at Stratford and given some performances there. And in any case, Coventry being so near to Stratford, the fame of the multiplied pageants presented during the holiday weeks of Easter and Whitsuntide, and especially of the brilliant concourse that came to witness the grand series of Corpus Christi plays, would have early attracted the young poet; and he must have become familiar with the precincts of

the Grey Friars at Coventry during the celebration of these great ecclesiastical festivals. The indirect evidence of this is supplied by Shakespeare's references to the well-known characters of the mysteries, such as Herod and Pilate, Cain and Judas, Termagaunt with his turbaned Turks and infidels, black-burning souls, grim and gaping hell, and the like. The moralities and interludes that gradually took the place of the Biblical mysteries were also acted by companies of strolling players over a wide area in the towns and cities of the midland and western counties. Malone gives from an eye-witness a detailed and graphic account of the public acting of one of these companies at Gloucester in 1569, the year during which the poet's father as high-bailiff had brought the stage-players into Stratford and inaugurated a series of performances in the guild hall. The play acted at Gloucester was "The Cradle of Security," one of the most striking and popular of the early moralities or interludes. Willis, the writer of the account, was just Shakespeare's age, having been born in 1564. As a boy of five years old he had been taken by his father to see the play, and, standing between his father's knees, watched the whole performance with such intense interest that, writing about it seventy years afterwards, he says: "The subject took such an impression upon me that when I came afterwards towards man's estate it was as fresh in my memory as if I had seen it newly enacted". In proof of this he gives a clear and detailed outline of the play. Willis was evidently a man of no special gifts, and, if the witnessing a play when a child could produce on an ordinary mind so memorable an impression, we may imagine what the effect would be on the mind of the



marvellous boy who, about the same time and under like circumstances, was taken by his father to see the performances at Stratford. The company that first visited Stratford being a distinguished one, their plays were probably of a higher type and better acted than "The Cradle of Security" at Gloucester; and their effect on the young poet would be the more vivid and stimulating from the keener sensibilities and latent dramatic power to which in his case they appealed. These early impressions would be renewed and deepened with the boy's advancing years. During the decade of Shakespeare's active youth from 1573 to 1584 the best companies in the kingdom constantly visited Stratford, and he would thus have the advantage of seeing the finest dramas yet produced acted by the best players of the time. This would be for him a rich and fruitful experience of the flexible and impressive form of art which at a moment of exuberant national vitality was attracting to itself the scattered forces of poetic genius, and soon gained a position of unrivalled supremacy. As he watched the performance in turn of the various kinds of interlude, comedy, and pastoral, of chronicle and biographical plays, of historical, domestic, or realistic tragedy, he would gain an instructive insight into the wide scope and vast resources of the rising drama. And he would have opportunities of acquiring some knowledge of stage business, management, and effects, as well as of dramatic form. Amongst the companies that visited Stratford were those of the powerful local Earls of Leicester, Warwick, and Worcester, whose members were largely recruited from the midland counties. The Earl of Leicester's company, the most eminent of all, included several Warwickshire men,

Latin grammar, the accidence, and lists of common words which were committed to memory and repeated two or three times a week, as well as further impressed upon their minds by varied exercises. In the second year the grammar was fully mastered, and the boys were drilled in short phrase-books, such as the *Sententiae Pueriles*, to increase their familiarity with the structure and idioms of the language. In the third year the books used were Æsop's *Fables*, Cato's *Maxims*, and some good manual of school conversation, such as the *Confabulationes Pueriles*. The most popular of these manuals in Shakespeare's day was that by the eminent scholar and still more eminent teacher Corderius. His celebrated *Colloquies* were probably used in almost every school in the kingdom; and Hoole, writing in 1652, says that the worth of the book had been proved "by scores if not hundreds of impressions in this and foreign countries". Bayle, indeed, says that from its universal use in the schools the editions of the book might be counted by thousands. This helps to illustrate the colloquial use of Latin, which was so essential a feature of grammar school discipline in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The evidence of Brinsley, who was Shakespeare's contemporary, conclusively proves that the constant speaking of Latin by all the boys of the more advanced forms was indispensable even in the smallest and poorest of the country grammar schools. The same holds true of letter-writing in Latin; and this, as we know from the result, was diligently and successfully practised in the Stratford grammar school. During his school days, therefore, Shakespeare would be thoroughly trained in the conversational and epistolary use of Latin, and several

having shared the fate of the guild at the suppression of religious houses, it was restored by Edward VI. in 1553, a few weeks before his death. The "King's New School," as it was now called, thus represented the fresh impulse given to education throughout the kingdom during the reign of Henry VIII.'s earnest-minded son, and well sustained under the enlightened rule of his sister, the learned virgin queen. What the course of instruction was in these country schools during the second half of the sixteenth century has recently been ascertained by special research,¹ and may be stated, at least in outline, with some degree of certainty and precision. As might have been expected, Latin was the chief scholastic drill, the thorough teaching of the Roman tongue being, as the name implies, the very purpose for which the grammar schools were originally founded. The regular teaching of Greek was indeed hardly introduced into the country schools until a somewhat later period. But the knowledge of Latin, as the language of all the learned professions, still largely used in literature, was regarded as quite indispensable. Whatever else might be neglected, the business of "gerund-grinding" was vigorously carried on, and the methods of teaching, the expedients and helps devised for enabling the pupils to read, write, and talk Latin, if rather complex and operose, were at the same time ingenious and effective. As a rule the pupil entered the grammar school at seven years old, having already acquired either at home or at the petty school the rudiments of reading and writing. During the first year the pupils were occupied with the elements of


¹ See *post*, pp. 147-249.

as a rule painstaking, intelligent, and fruitful. Brinsley himself was for many years an eminent and successful teacher in the grammar school of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, a small town on the borders of Warwickshire, only a few miles indeed from Coventry; and in his *Ludus Literarius*, referring to a book of exercises on the Latin accidence and grammar he had prepared, he says that he had chiefly followed the order of the questions "of that ancient schoolmaster Master Brunsword of Maxfield (Macclesfield) in Cheshire, so much commended for his order and schollers; who of all other commeth therein the neerest unto the marke". Another provincial schoolmaster, Mr. Robert Doughty, a contemporary of Shakespeare, who was for nearly fifty years at the head of the Wakefield grammar school, is celebrated by Hoole, not only as an eminent teacher who had constantly sent out good scholars, but as one who had produced a class of teachers emulating his own educational zeal and intelligence. The masters of the Stratford grammar school in Shakespeare's time seem to have been men of a similar stamp. One of them, John Brunsword, who held the post for three years during the poet's childhood, was almost certainly a relative, probably a son, of the eminent Macclesfield master whose character and work Brinsley praises so highly. At least, Brunsword being an uncommon name, when we find it borne by two grammar-school masters in neighbouring counties who flourished either together or in close succession to each other, it is natural to conclude that there must have been some relationship between them, and if so we may be sure that the Stratford master, who was evidently the younger man, had been well trained and must have

proved an efficient teacher. The masters who followed Brunsword were university men of at least average attainments and ability, as they rapidly gained promotion in the Church. Thomas Hunt, who was head master during the most important years of Shakespeare's school course, became incumbent of the neighbouring village of Luddington; and, if there is any truth in the tradition that the poet's marriage was celebrated there, it is not improbable that, from having been a favourite pupil, he may have become the personal friend of his former master. In any case, during the years of his school attendance the poet must have gained sufficient knowledge of Latin to read for his own instruction and delight the authors included in the school curriculum who had struck his fancy and stimulated his awakening powers. While his writings supply clear evidence in support of this general position, they also bring out vividly the fact that Ovid was a special favourite with Shakespeare at the outset of his career. The influence of this romantic and elegiac Roman poet is indeed strongly marked and clearly traceable in the poems as well as in the early plays.

According to Rowe's account, Shakespeare was withdrawn from school about 1578, a year or two before he had completed the usual course for boys going into business or passing on to the universities. The immediate cause of the withdrawal seems to have been the growing embarrassments of John Shakespeare's affairs, the boy being wanted at home to help in the various departments of his father's business. The poet had just entered on his fifteenth year, and his school attainments and turn for affairs, no less than his native energy and ability, fitted him for efficient action in

almost any fairly open career. But open careers were not numerous at Stratford, and John Shakespeare's once prosperous way of life was now hampered by actual and threatening difficulties which the zeal and affection of his son were powerless to remove or avert. No doubt the boy did his best, trying to understand his father's position, and discharging with prompt alacrity any duties that came to be done. But he would soon discover how hopeless such efforts were, and with this deepening conviction there would come upon him the reaction of weariness and disappointment, which is the true *inferno* of ardent youthful minds. His father's difficulties were evidently of the chronic and complicated kind against which the generous and impulsive forces of youth and inexperience are of little avail. And, after his son had done his utmost to relieve the sinking fortunes of the family, the aching sense of failure would be among the bitterest experiences of his early years, would be indeed a sharp awakening to the realities and responsibilities of life. Within the narrow circle of his own domestic relationships and dearest interests he would feel with Hamlet that the times were out of joint, and in his gloomier moods be ready to curse the destiny that seemed to lay upon him, in part at least, the burden of setting the obstinately crooked straight. As a relief from such moods and a distraction from the fruitless toils of home affairs, he would naturally plunge with keener zest into such outlets for youthful energy and adventure as the town and neighbourhood afforded. What the young poet's actual occupations were during the four years and a half that elapsed between his leaving school and his marriage we have no adequate materials for deciding in



any detail. But the local traditions on the subject would seem to indicate that after the adverse turn in his fortunes John Shakespeare had considerably contracted the area of his commercial transactions. Having virtually alienated his wife's patrimony by the mortgage of the Asbies and the disposal of all interest in the Snitterfield property, he seems to have given up the agricultural branches of his business, retaining only his original occupation of dealer in leather, skins, and sometimes carcasses as well. His wider speculations had probably turned out ill, and having no longer any land of his own he apparently relinquished the corn and timber business, restricting himself to the town trades of fellmonger, wool-stapler, and butcher. Aubrey at least had heard that Shakespeare after leaving school assisted his father in these branches,—and at times with a deal of youthful extravagance indicative of irrepressible energy and spirit. Aubrey also reports, on the authority of Beeston, and as incidentally proving he knew Latin fairly well, that for a time the poet was a teacher in a country school; while Malone believed from the internal evidence of his writings that he had spent two or three years in a lawyer's office. These stories may be taken to indicate, what is no doubt true, that at a time of domestic need the poet was ready to turn his hand to anything that offered. It is no doubt also true that he would prefer the comparative retirement and regularity of teaching or clerk's work to the intermittent drudgery and indolence of a retail shop in a small market-town. There is, however, no direct evidence in favour of either supposition; and the indirect evidence for the lawyer's office theory which has found favour with several recent critics is

by no means decisive. Whether engaged in a lawyer's office or not, we may be quite sure that during the years of adolescence he was actively occupied in work of some kind or other. He was far too sensible and energetic to remain without employment; shapeless idleness had no attraction for his healthy nature, and his strong family feeling is certainly in favour of the tradition that for a time he did his best to help his father in his business.

But, however he may have been employed, this interval of home life was for the poet a time of active growth and development, and no kind of business routine could avail to absorb his expanding powers or repress the exuberant vitality of his nature. During these critical years, to a vigorous and healthy mind such as Shakespeare possessed, action—action of an adventurous and recreative kind, in which the spirit is quickened and refreshed by new experiences—must have become an absolute necessity of existence. The necessity was all the more urgent in Shakespeare's case from the narrower circle within which the once prosperous and expanding home life was now confined. We have seen that the poet occasionally shared the orthodox field sports organised by the country gentlemen, where landlords and tenants, yeomen and squires, animated by a kindred sentiment, meet to a certain extent on common ground. But this long-drawn pursuit of pleasure as an isolated unit in a local crowd would hardly satisfy the thirst for passionate excitement and personal adventure which is so dominant an impulse in the hey-day of youthful blood. It is doubtful, too, whether in the decline of his father's fortunes Shakespeare would have cared to join the prosperous concourse of local

sportsmen. He would probably be thrown a good deal amongst a somewhat lower, though no doubt energetic and intelligent, class of town companions. And they would devise together exploits which, if somewhat irregular, possessed the inspiring charm of freedom and novelty, and would thus be congenial to an ardent nature with a passionate interest in life and action. Such a nature would eagerly welcome enterprises with a dash of hazard and daring in them, fitted to bring the more resolute virtues into play, and develop in moments of emergency the manly qualities of vigilance and promptitude, courage and endurance, dexterity and skill. It would seem indeed at first sight as though a quiet neighbourhood like Stratford could afford little scope for such adventures. But even at Stratford there were always the forest and the river, the outlying farms with adjacent parks and manor houses, the wide circle of picturesque towns and villages with their guilds and clubs, their local Shallows and Slenders, Dogberries and Verges; and in the most quiet neighbourhoods it still remains true that adventures are to the adventurous. That this dictum was verified in Shakespeare's experience seems clear alike from the internal evidence of his writings and the concurrent testimony of local tradition. In its modern form the story of the Bidford challenge exploit may indeed be little better than a myth. But in substance it is by no means incredible, and if we knew all about the incident we should probably find there were other points to be tested between the rival companies besides strength of head to resist the effects of the well-known Bidford beer. The prompt refusal to return with his companions and renew the contest

on the following day,—a decision playfully expressed and emphasised in the well-known doggerel lines,—implies that in Shakespeare's view such forms of good fellowship were to be accepted on social not self-indulgent grounds, that they were not to be resorted to for the sake of the lower accessories only, or allowed to grow into evil habits from being unduly repeated or prolonged. It is clear that this general principle of recreative and adventurous enterprise, announced more than once in his writings, guided his own conduct even in the excitable and impulsive season of youth and early manhood. If he let himself go, as he no doubt sometimes did, it was only as a good rider on coming to the turf gives the horse his head in order to enjoy the exhilaration of a gallop, having the bridle well in hand the while, and able to rein in the excited steed at a moment's notice. It may be said of Shakespeare at such seasons, as of his own Prince Hal, that he—

"Obscured his contemplation
Under the veil of wildness ; which, no doubt,
Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,
Unseen, yet crescive in his faculty".

The deer-stealing tradition illustrates the same point ; and though belonging perhaps to a rather later period it may be conveniently noticed here. This fragment of Shakespeare's personal history rests on a much surer basis than the Bidford incident, being supported not only by early multiplied and constant traditions, but by evidence which the poet himself has supplied. Rowe's somewhat formal version of the narrative is to the effect that Shakespeare in his youth was guilty of an extravagance which, though unfortunate at the time, had the happy result of helping to develop his

dramatic genius. This misfortune was that of being engaged with some of his companions more than once in robbing a park belonging to Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote. Sir Thomas, it is said, prosecuted him sharply for the offence, and in retaliation he wrote a satirical ballad upon him, which so incensed the baronet that Shakespeare thought it prudent to leave Stratford and join his old friends and associates the players in London. Other versions of the tradition exist giving fresh details, some of which are on the face of them later additions of a fictitious and fanciful kind. But it would be useless to discuss the accretions incident to any narrative, however true, orally transmitted through two or three generations before being reduced to a written shape. All that can be required or expected of such traditions is that they should contain a kernel of biographical fact, and be true in substance although possibly not in form. And tried by this test the tradition in question must certainly be accepted as a genuine contribution to our knowledge of the poet's early years. Indeed, it could hardly have been repeated again and again by inhabitants of Stratford within a few years of Shakespeare's death if it did not embody a characteristic feature of his early life which was well known in the town. This feature was no doubt the poet's love of woodland life, and the woodland sports through which it is realised in the most animated and vigorous form.

The neighbourhood of Stratford in Shakespeare's day afforded considerable scope for this kind of healthy recreation. There was the remnant of the old Arden forest, which, though still nominally a royal domain, was virtually free for many kinds of sport. Indeed,

the observance of the forest laws had fallen into such neglect in the early years of Elizabeth's reign that even unlicensed deer-hunting in the royal domains was common enough. And hardly any attempt was made to prevent the pursuit of the smaller game belonging to the warren and the chase. Then, three or four miles to the east of Stratford, between the Warwick road and the river, stretched the romantic park of Fulbroke, which, as the property of an attainted exile, sequestered though not seized by the Crown, was virtually open to all comers. There can be little doubt that when Shakespeare and his companions wished a day's outing in the woods they usually resorted to some part of the Arden forest still available for sporting purposes. But sometimes, probably on account of its greater convenience, they seem to have changed the venue to Fulbroke Park, and there they might easily come into collision with Sir Thomas Lucy's keepers. There has been a good deal of discussion as to the scene of the traditional adventure, but the probabilities of the case are strongly in favour of Fulbroke. When Sir Walter Scott visited Sir Thomas Lucy at Charlecote in 1828, Sir Thomas told him that the park from which Shakespeare stole the deer was not Charlecote, but one belonging to a mansion at some distance, the context indicating Fulbroke as the scene of the exploit. And Mr. Bracebridge, in his interesting pamphlet *Shakespeare no Deer-Stealer*, has thrown fresh light on the subject, and made the whole incident more intelligible by marshalling the reasons in favour of this view. The park had, it seems, been held by the Lucys under the Crown in the time of Henry VIII., but was afterwards granted by

Queen Mary to one of her privy councillors,—Sir Francis Engelfield. Being a devoted Romanist, he fled to Spain on the accession of Elizabeth, and was subsequently adjudged a traitor, the Fulbroke estate being sequestered though not administered by the Crown. The park being thus without a legal custodian for more than a quarter of a century became disparked, the palings having fallen into decay and the fences being in many places broken down. The deer with which it abounded were thus left without any legal protection, and might be hunted at will by enterprising sportsmen. The only person likely to check this freedom or to attempt to do so was Sir Thomas Lucy, whose own park of Charlecote ran for a mile along the other side of the river just below Fulbroke. As the nearest large landed proprietor, having a direct interest in the state of the neighbouring park, he might naturally think himself entitled to act as a kind of *ad interim* custodian of Fulbroke. And with his aristocratic feeling, his severe and exacting temper, he would be likely enough to push his temporary guardianship of custom or courtesy into an exclusive right, at least so far as the venison of the park was concerned. In any case Sir Thomas's keepers would occasionally perambulate Fulbroke Park as a protection to Charlecote, and in doing so they probably came upon Shakespeare and his companions after they had brought down a buck and were about to break it up for removal. Or the hunted deer may have crossed the river at the shallow ford between the two parks, and, pursued by the eager sportsmen, have been brought down within the Charlecote grounds. In either case the keepers would denounce the trespass, and possibly with menac-

ing and abusive words demand the buck for their master. On being treated in this insulting way, Shakespeare, who had pride and personal dignity as well as courage, would deny any intentional or actual trespass, refuse to give up the venison, and plainly tell the keepers that they might report the matter to Sir Thomas Lucy and he would answer for himself and his companions. On finding what had happened, Sir Thomas would be all the more incensed and indignant from the consciousness that he had pushed his claims beyond the point at which they could legally be enforced. And, being to some extent in a false position, he would be proportionately wrathful and vindictive against the youthful sportsmen, and especially against their leader who had dared to resist and defy his authority. Sir Thomas was the great man of Stratford, who came periodically to the town on magistrate's business, was appealed to as arbitrator in special cases, and entertained by the corporation during his visits. In character he seems to have combined aristocratic pride and narrowness with the harshness and severity of the Puritan temper. As a landed proprietor and local magnate he was exacting and exclusive, looking with a kind of Puritanical sourness on all youthful frolics, merriment, and recreation. He would thus have a natural antipathy to young Shakespeare's free, generous, and enjoying nature, and would resent as an unpardonable outrage his high-spirited conduct in attempting to resist any claims he chose to make. Sir Thomas would no doubt vent his indignation to the authorities at Stratford, and try to set the law in motion, and failing in this might have threatened, as Justice Shallow does, to make a Star-Chamber matter of it. This was the kind of extreme

course which a man in his position might take where there was no available local redress for any wrong he imagined himself to have suffered. And the Stratford authorities, being naturally anxious to propitiate the great man, may have suggested that it would be well if young Shakespeare could be out of the way for a time. This would help him to decide on the adoption of a plan already seriously entertained of going to London to push his fortune among the players.

There is, however, another aspect in which this traditional incident may be looked at, which seems at least worthy of consideration. It is possible that Sir Thomas Lucy may have been prejudiced against the Shakespeares on religious grounds, and that this feeling may have prompted him to a display of exceptional severity against their eldest son. As we have seen, he was a narrow and extreme, a persecuting and almost fanatical Protestant, and several events had recently happened calculated to intensify his bitterness against the Romanists. In particular, Mary Shakespeare's family connections—the Ardens of Parkhall—had been convicted of conspiracy against the queen's life. The son-in-law of Edward Arden, John Somerville, a rash and "hot-spirited young gentleman," instigated by Hall, the family priest, had formed the design of going to London and assassinating Queen Elizabeth with his own hand. He started on his journey in November, 1583, but talked so incautiously by the way that he was arrested, conveyed to the Tower, and under a threat of the rack confessed everything, accusing his father-in-law as an accomplice and the priest as the instigator of the crime. All three were tried and convicted, their fate being probably hastened, as Dugdale

states, by the animosity of Leicester against the Ardens. Somerville strangled himself in prison, and Edward Arden was hanged at Tyburn. These events produced a deep impression in Warwickshire, and no one in the locality would be more excited by them than Sir Thomas Lucy. His intensely vindictive feeling against the Romanists was exemplified a little later by his bringing forward a motion in Parliament in favour of devising some new and lingering tortures for the execution of the Romanist conspirator Parry. As Mr. Froude puts it, "Sir Thomas Lucy,—Shakespeare's Lucy, the original perhaps of Justice Shallow, with an English fierceness at the bottom of his stupid nature,—having studied the details of the execution of Gerard, proposed in the House of Commons 'that some new law should be devised for Parry's execution, such as might be thought fittest for his extraordinary and horrible treason'". The Ardens were devoted Romanists; the terrible calamity that had befallen the family occurred only a short time before the deer-stealing adventure; and the Shakespeares themselves, so far from being Puritans, were suspected by many of being but indifferent Protestants. John Shakespeare was an irregular attendant at church, and soon ceased to appear there at all, so that Sir Thomas Lucy probably regarded him as little better than a recusant. In any case Sir Thomas would be likely to resent the elder Shakespeare's convivial turn and profuse hospitality as alderman and bailiff, and especially his official patronage of the players and active encouragement of their dramatic representations in the guild hall. The Puritans had a rooted antipathy to the stage, and to the jaundiced eye of the local justice the

reverses of the Shakespeares would probably appear as a judgment on their way of life. He would all the more eagerly seize any chance of humiliating their eldest son, who still held up his head and dared to look upon life as a scene of cheerful activity and occasional enjoyment. The young poet, indeed, embodied the very characteristics most opposed to Sir Thomas's dark and narrow conceptions of life and duty. His notions of public duty were very much restricted to persecuting the Romanists and preserving the game on Protestant estates. And Shakespeare probably took no pains to conceal his want of sympathy with these supreme objects of aristocratic and Puritanical zeal. And Sir Thomas, having at length caught him, as he imagined, in a technical trespass, would be sure to pursue the culprit with the unrelenting rigour of his hard and gloomy nature. But, whatever may have been the actual or aggravating circumstances of the original offence, there can be no doubt that an element of truth is contained in the deer-stealing tradition. The substantial facts in the story are that Shakespeare in his youth was fond of woodland sport, and that in one of his hunting adventures he came into collision with Sir Thomas Lucy's keepers, and fell under the severe ban of that local potentate. The latter point is indirectly confirmed by Shakespeare's inimitable sketch of the formal country justice in the second part of "Henry IV." and the "Merry Wives of Windsor,"—Robert Shallow, Esq., being sufficiently identified with Sir Thomas Lucy by the pointed allusion to the coat of arms, as well as by other allusions of a more indirect but hardly less decisive kind. To talk of the sketch as an act of revenge is to treat it too seriously, or rather

in too didactic and pedestrian a spirit. Having been brought into close relations with the justice, Shakespeare could hardly be expected to resist the temptation of turning to dramatic account so admirable a subject for humorous portraiture. The other point of the tradition, Shakespeare's fondness for woodland life, is supported by the internal evidence of his writings, and especially by the numerous allusions to the subject in his poems and earlier plays. The many references to woods and sports in the poems are well known; and in the early plays the allusions are not less frequent and in some respects even more striking. Having no space, however, to give these in detail, a general reference must suffice. The entire action of "Love's Labour's Lost" takes place in a royal park, while the scene of the most critical events of the "Two Gentlemen of Verona" is a forest inhabited by generous outlaws, whose offences appear to have been youthful follies, and who on being pardoned by the duke become his loyal followers. In these early plays it seems as though Shakespeare could hardly conceive of a royal palace or capital city without a forest close at hand as the scene of princely sport, criminal intrigue, or fairy enchantment. Outside the gates of Athens swept over hill and dale the wonderful forest which is the scene of the "Midsummer Night's Dream"; and in "Titus Andronicus" imperial Rome seems to be almost surrounded by the brightness and terror, the inspiring charm and sombre shades of rolling forest lawns and ravines, the "ruthless, vast, and gloomy woods".

There can be no doubt, therefore, that during the years of home life at Stratford Shakespeare was often in the forest. But in the latter part of the time he

would be found still more frequently hastening through the fields to Shottery, paying long visits at the Hathaway farm, followed by late and reluctant leave-takings. For the next important fact in Shakespeare's history is his marriage with Anne Hathaway. This event, or rather the formal and ecclesiastical part of it, took place in the end of November, 1582, the bond for the licence from the Consistory Court being dated on the 28th of the month. Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps has, however, sufficiently proved by detailed instances that the formal and public part of the ceremony would, according to the usage of the time, have been preceded some months earlier by the betrothal or pre-contract, which was in itself of legal validity. Shakespeare's marriage may therefore be dated from the summer of 1582, he being then in his nineteenth year, while his bride was between seven and eight years older. Many of the poet's biographers have assumed that the marriage was a hasty, unsuitable, and in its results an unhappy one. It is necessary therefore to repeat with all possible emphasis the well-founded statement of Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps that "there is not a particle of direct evidence" for either of these suppositions. The marriage could hardly have been a hasty one, for, as we have seen, the two families had been intimate for fifteen years, and Shakespeare had known Anne Hathaway from his early boyhood. As to whether it was suitable or not Shakespeare himself was the best and only adequate judge, and there is not, in the whole literature of the subject, even the shadow of a successful appeal against his decision. And, so far from the marriage having been unhappy, all the evidence within our reach goes to show that it was not only a union of mutual affection

but a most fortunate event for the poet himself, as well as for the wife and mother who remained at the head of his family, venerated and loved by her children, and a devoted helpmate to her husband to the very end. Looking at the matter in its wider aspects, and especially in relation to his future career, it may be said that Shakespeare's early marriage gave him at the most emotional and unsettled period of life a fixed centre of affection and a supreme motive to prompt and fruitful exertion. This would have a salutary and steadying effect on a nature so richly endowed with plastic fancy and passionate impulse, combined with rare powers of reflective foresight and self-control. If Shakespeare's range and depth of emotional and imaginative genius had not been combined with unusual force of character and strength of ethical and artistic purpose, and these elements had not been early stimulated to sustained activity, he could never have had so great and uninterrupted a career. And nothing perhaps is a more direct proof of Shakespeare's manly character than the prompt and serious way in which, from the first, he assumed the full responsibility of his acts, and unflinchingly faced the wider range of duties they entailed. He himself has told us that—

“ Love is too young to know what conscience is :
Yet who knows not conscience is born of love ? ”

And it remains true that conscience, courage, simplicity, and nobleness of conduct are all, in generous natures, evoked and strengthened by the vital touch of that regenerating power. Shakespeare's whole course was changed by the new influence ; and with his growing responsibilities his character seems to have rapidly

matured, and his powers to have found fresh and more effective development. His first child Susanna was born in May, 1583, and, as she was baptised on the 26th, the day of her birth may have been the 23rd, which would be exactly a month after her father completed his nineteenth year. In February, 1585, the family was unexpectedly enlarged by the birth of twins, a boy and a girl, who were named respectively Hamnet and Judith, after Hamnet and Judith Sadler, inhabitants of Stratford, who were lifelong friends of Shakespeare. Before he had attained his majority the poet had thus a wife and three children dependent upon him, with little opportunity or means apparently of advancing his fortunes in Stratford. The situation was in itself sufficiently serious. But it was complicated by his father's increasing embarrassments and multiplied family claims. Four children still remained in Henley Street to be provided for,—the youngest, Edmund, born in May, 1580, being scarcely five years old. John Shakespeare, too, was being sued by various creditors, and apparently in some danger of being arrested for debt. All this was enough to make a much older man than the poet look anxiously about him. But, with the unfailing sense and sagacity he displayed in practical affairs, he seems to have formed a sober and just estimate of his own powers, and made a careful survey of the various fields available for their remunerative exercise. As the result of his deliberations he decided in favour of trying the metropolitan stage and theatre. He had already tested his faculty of acting by occasional essays on the provincial stage; and, once in London amongst the players, where new pieces were constantly required, he would have full scope for the exercise of

his higher powers as a dramatic poet. At the outset he could indeed only expect to discharge the lower function, but, with the growing popular demand for dramatic representations, the actor's calling, though not without its social drawbacks, was in the closing decades of the sixteenth century a lucrative one. Greene, in his autobiographical sketch *Never Too Late*, one of the most interesting of his prose tracts, illustrates this point in the account he gives of his early dealings with the players and experiences as a writer for the stage. Speaking through his hero Francesco, he says that "when his fortunes were at the lowest ebb he fell in amongst a company of players who persuaded him to try his wit in writing of comedies, tragedies, or pastorals, and if he could perform anything worth the stage, then they would largely reward him for his pains". Succeeding in the work, he was so well paid that he soon became comparatively wealthy, and went about with a well-filled purse. Although writing from the author's rather than the actor's point of view, Greene intimates that the players grew rapidly rich and were entitled both to praise and profit so long as they were "neither covetous nor insolent". In the *Return from Parnassus* (1601) the large sums, fortunes indeed, realised by good actors are referred to as matter of notoriety. One of the disappointed academic scholars, indeed, moralising on the fact with some bitterness, exclaims :—

"England affords those glorious vagabonds,
That carried erst their fardles on their backs,
Coursers to ride on through the gazing streets,
Sweeping it in their glaring satin suits,
And pages to attend their masterships :
With mouthing words that better wits have framed
They purchase lands, and now esquires are made".

And in a humorous sketch entitled *Ratseis Ghost*, and published in the first decade of the seventeenth century, an apparent reference to Shakespeare himself brings out the same point. The hero of the tract, Ratsey, a highwayman, having compelled a set of strolling players to act before him, advised their leader to leave the country and get to London, where, having a good presence for the stage and a turn for the work, he would soon fill his pockets, adding: "When thou feelest thy purse well-lined, buy thee some place of lordship in the country, that, growing weary of playing, thy money may bring thee dignity and reputation". The player, thanking him for his advice, replies: "I have heard indeed of some that have gone to London very meanly, who have in time become exceedingly wealthy". The movement to the London stage was therefore from a worldly point of view a prudent one, and for the higher purposes of Shakespeare's life it was equally wise and necessary. For besides the economic and practical considerations in favour of the step there must have pressed on the poet's mind the importance of a wider sphere of life and action for the enlargement of his inward horizon, and the effective development of his poetical and dramatic gifts.


The exact date of this event—of Shakespeare's leaving Stratford for London—cannot be fixed with any certainty. All the probabilities of the case, however, indicate that it must have taken place between the spring of 1585 and the autumn of 1587. In the latter year three of the leading companies visited Stratford, those belonging to the queen, Lord Leicester, and Lord Essex; and, as Lord Leicester's included three of Shakespeare's fellow-townsmen,—Burbage, Heminge,

and Greene,—it is not improbable that he may then have decided on trying his fortune in London. At the same time it is quite possible, and on some grounds even likely, that the step may have been taken somewhat earlier. But for the five years between 1587 and 1592 we have no direct knowledge of Shakespeare's movements at all, the period being a complete biographical blank, dimly illuminated at the outset by one or two doubtful traditions. We have indeed the assurance that after leaving Stratford he continued to visit his native town at least once every year; and if he had left in 1586 we may confidently assume that he returned the next year for the purpose, amongst others, of consulting with his father and mother about the Asbies mortgage and of taking part with them in their action against John Lambert. His uniting with them in this action deserves special notice, as showing that he continued to take the keenest personal interest in all home affairs, and, although living mainly in London, was still looked upon, not only as the eldest son, but as the adviser and friend of the family. The anecdotes of Shakespeare's occupations on going to London are, that at first he was employed in a comparatively humble capacity about the theatre, and that for a time he took charge of the horses of those who rode to see the plays, and was so successful in this work that he soon had a number of juvenile assistants who were known as Shakespeare's boys. Even in their crude form these traditions embody a tribute to Shakespeare's business promptitude and skill. If there is any truth in them they may be taken to indicate that, while filling some subordinate post in the theatre, Shakespeare perceived a defective point in the local

arrangements, or heard the complaints of the mounted gallants as to the difficulty of putting up their horses. His provisions for meeting the difficulty seem to have been completely and even notoriously successful. There were open sheds or temporary stables in connection with the theatre in Shoreditch; and Shakespeare's boys, if the tradition is true, probably each took charge of a horse in these stables while its owner was at the play. But in any case this would be simply a brief episode in Shakespeare's multifarious employments when he first reached the scene of his active labours in London. He must soon have had more serious and absorbing professional occupations in the green room, on the stage, and in the laboratory of his own teeming brain, "the quick forge and working house of thought".

But his leisure hours during his first years in London would naturally be devoted to continuing his education and equipping himself as fully as possible for his future work. It was probably during this time, as Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps suggests, that he acquired the working knowledge of French and Italian that his writings show he must have possessed. And it is perhaps now possible to point out the sources whence his knowledge of these languages was derived, or at least the master under whom he chiefly studied them. The most celebrated and accomplished teacher of French and Italian in Shakespeare's day was the resolute John Florio, who, after leaving Magdalen College, Oxford, lived for years in London, engaged in tutorial and literary work, and intimately associated with eminent men of letters and their noble patrons. After the accession of James I., Florio was made tutor to Prince Henry, received an appointment about the

Court, became the friend and personal favourite of Queen Anne (to whom he dedicated the second edition of his Italian dictionary, entitled the *World of Words*), and died full of years and honours in 1625, having survived Shakespeare nine years. Florio had married the sister of Daniel the poet, and Ben Jonson presented a copy of the *Fox* to him, with the inscription, "To his loving father and worthy friend Master John Florio, Ben Jonson seals this testimony of his friendship and love". Daniel writes a poem of some length in praise of his translation of Montaigne, while other contemporary poets contribute commendatory verses which are prefixed to his other publications. There are substantial reasons for believing that Shakespeare was also one of Florio's friends, and that during his early years in London he evinced his friendship by yielding for once to the fashion of writing this kind of eulogistic verse. Prefixed to Florio's *Second Fruits*, Prof. Minto discovered a sonnet so superior and characteristic that he was impressed with the conviction that Shakespeare must have written it. The internal evidence is in favour of this conclusion, while Mr. Minto's critical analysis and comparison of its thought and diction with Shakespeare's early work tends strongly to support the reality and value of the discovery. In his next work, produced four years later, Florio claims the sonnet as the work of a friend "who loved better to be a poet than to be called one," and vindicates it from the indirect attack of a hostile critic, H. S., who had also disparaged the work in which it appeared. There are other points of connection between Florio and Shakespeare. The only known volume that certainly belonged to Shakespeare and contains his autograph is



Florio's version of Montaigne's *Essays* in the British Museum ; and critics have from time to time produced evidence to show that Shakespeare must have read it carefully, and was well acquainted with its contents. Victor Hugo in a powerful critical passage strongly supports this view. The most striking single proof of the point is Gonzalo's ideal republic in the "Tempest," which is simply a passage from Florio's version turned into blank verse. Florio and Shakespeare were both, moreover, intimate personal friends of the young Earl of Southampton, who, in harmony with his generous character and strong literary tastes, was the munificent patron of each. Shakespeare, it will be remembered, dedicated his "Venus and Adonis" and his "Lucrece" to this young nobleman ; and three years later, in 1598, Florio dedicated the first edition of his Italian dictionary to the earl in terms that almost recall Shakespeare's words. Shakespeare had said, in addressing the earl : "What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours, being part in all I have devoted yours". And Florio says : "In truth I acknowledge an entire debt, not only of my best knowledge, but of all, yea of more than I know or can to your bounteous lordship, most noble, most virtuous, and most honourable Earl of Southampton, in whose pay and patronage I have lived some years, to whom I owe and vow the years I have to live". Shakespeare was also familiar with Florio's earlier works, his *First Fruits* and *Second Fruits*, which were simply carefully prepared manuals for the study of Italian, containing an outline of the grammar, a selection of dialogues in parallel columns of Italian and English, and longer extracts from classical Italian writers in prose and verse. We have collected various

points of indirect evidences showing Shakespeare's familiarity with these manuals, but these being numerous and minute cannot be given here. It must suffice to refer in illustration of this point to a single instance—the lines in praise of Venice which Holofernes gives forth with so much unction in “Love’s Labour’s Lost”. The *First Fruits* was published in 1578, and was for some years the most popular manual for the study of Italian. It is the book that Shakespeare would naturally have used in attempting to acquire a knowledge of the language after his arrival in London; and on finding that the author was the friend of some of his literary associates he would probably have sought his acquaintance and secured his personal help. As Florio was also a French scholar and habitually taught both languages, Shakespeare probably owed to him his knowledge of French as well as of Italian. If the sonnet is accepted as Shakespeare’s work he must have made Florio’s acquaintance within a year or two after going to London, as in 1591 he appears in the character of a personal friend and well-wisher. In any case Shakespeare would almost certainly have met Florio a few years later at the house of Lord Southampton, with whom the Italian scholar seems to have occasionally resided. It also appears that he was in the habit of visiting at several titled houses, amongst others those of the Earl of Bedford and Sir John Harrington. It seems also probable that he may have assisted Harrington in his translation of Ariosto. Another and perhaps even more direct link connecting Shakespeare with Florio during his early years in London is found in their common relation to the family of Lord Derby. In the year 1585 Florio translated a

letter of news from Rome, giving an account of the sudden death of Pope Gregory XIII. and the election of his successor. This translation, published in July, 1585, was dedicated "To the Right Excellent and Honourable Lord, Henry, Earl of Derby," in terms expressive of Florio's strong personal obligations to the earl and devotion to his service. Three years later, on the death of Leicester in 1588, Lord Derby's eldest son, Ferdinando, Lord Strange, became the patron of Leicester's company of players, which Shakespeare had recently joined. The new patron must have taken special interest in the company, as they soon became (chiefly through his influence) great favourites at Court, superseding the queen's players, and enjoying something like a practical monopoly of royal representations. Shakespeare would thus have the opportunity of making Florio's acquaintance at the outset of his London career, and everything tends to show that he did not miss the chance of numbering amongst his personal friends so accomplished a scholar, so alert, energetic, and original a man of letters, as the resolute John Florio. Warburton, it is well known, had coupled Florio's name with Shakespeare in the last century. He suggested, or rather asserted, that Florio was the original of Holofernes in "Love's Labour's Lost". Of all Warburton's arbitrary conjectures and dogmatic assumptions this is perhaps the most infelicitous. That a scholar and man of the world like Florio, with marked literary powers of his own, the intimate friend and associate of some of the most eminent poets of the day, living in princely and noble circles, honoured by royal personages and welcomed at noble houses,—that such a man should be selected as the original of a rustic

pedant and dominie like Holofernes, is surely the climax of reckless guesswork and absurd suggestion. There is, it is true, a distant connection between Holofernes and Italy—the pedant being a well-known figure in the Italian comedies that obviously affected Shakespeare's early work. This usage calls forth a kind of sigh from the easy-going and tolerant Montaigne as he thinks of his early tutors and youthful interest in knowledge. "I have in my youth," he tells us, "oftentimes been vexed to see a pedant brought in in most of Italian comedies for a vice or sport-maker, and the nick-name of magister (dominie) to be of no better signification amongst us." We may be sure that, if Shakespeare knew Florio before he produced "Love's Labour's Lost," it was not as a sport-maker to be mocked at, but as a friend and literary associate to whom he felt personally indebted.

But, whatever his actual relation to the Italian scholar may have been, Shakespeare, on reaching London and beginning to breathe its literary atmosphere, would naturally betake himself to the study of Italian. At various altitudes the English Parnassus was at that time fanned by soft airs, swept by invigorating breezes, or darkened by gloomy and infected vapours from the south. In other words, the influence of Italian literature, so dominant in England during the second half of the sixteenth century, may be said to have reached its highest point at the very time when Shakespeare entered on his poetic and dramatic labours. This influence was in part a revival of the strong impulse communicated to English literature from Italy in Chaucer's day. The note of the revival was struck in the title of Thomas's excellent Italian

manual, "Principal rules of Italian grammar, with a dictionarie for the better understanding of *Boccace*, *Petrarcha*, and *Dante*" (1550). The first fruits of the revival were the lyrical poems of Surrey and Wyatt, written somewhat earlier, but published for the first time in Tottel's *Miscellany* (1557). The sonnets of these poets—the first ever written in English—produced in a few years the whole musical choir of Elizabethan sonneteers. Surrey and Wyatt were sympathetic students of Petrarch, and, as Puttenham says, reproduced in their sonnets and love poems much of the musical sweetness, the tender and refined sentiment, of the Petrarchian lyric. This perhaps can hardly in strictness of speech be called a revival, for, strong as was the influence of Boccaccio, and in a less degree of Dante, during the first period of English literature, the lyrical poetry of the south, as represented by Petrarch, affected English poetry almost for the first time in the sixteenth century. This influence, as subsequently developed by Lyly in his prose comedies and romances, indirectly affected the drama, and clear traces of it are to be found in Shakespeare's own work. Surrey, however, rendered the Elizabethans a still greater service by introducing from Italy the unrhymed verse, which, with the truest instinct, was adopted by the great dramatists as the metrical vehicle best fitted to meet the requirements of the most flexible and expressive form of the poetic art. But, although in part the revival of a previous impulse, the Italian literature that most powerfully affected English poetry during the Elizabethan period was in the main new. During the interval the prolific genius of the south had put forth fresh efforts which combined, in new and characteristic products, the

forms of classical poetry and the substance of southern thought and feeling with the spirit of mediæval romance. The chivalrous and martial epics of Ariosto and Tasso represented a new school of poetry which embraced within its expanding range every department of imaginative activity. There appeared in rapid succession romantic pastorals, romantic elegies, romantic satires, and romantic dramas, as well as romantic epics. The epics were occupied with marvels of knightly daring and chivalrous adventure, expressed in flowing and melodious numbers; while the literature as a whole dealt largely in the favourite elements of ideal sentiment, learned allusion, and elaborate ornament, and was brightened at intervals by grave and sportive, by highly wrought but fanciful, pictures of courtly and Arcadian life. While Sidney and Spenser represented in England the new school of allegorical and romantic pastoral and epic, Shakespeare and his associates betook themselves to the study of the romantic drama and the whole dramatic element in recent and contemporary southern literature. The Italian drama proper, so far as it affected the form adopted by English playwrights, had indeed virtually done its work before any of Shakespeare's characteristic pieces were produced. His immediate predecessors, Greene, Peele, and Lodge, Nash, Kyd, and Marlowe, had all probably studied Italian models more carefully than Shakespeare himself ever did; and the result is seen in the appearance among these later Elizabethans of the romantic drama, which united the better elements of the English academic and popular plays with features of diction and fancy, incident and structure, that were virtually new. Many members of this dramatic group were,

like Greene, good Italian scholars, had themselves travelled in Italy, knew the Italian stage at first hand, and, as their writings show, were well acquainted with recent Italian literature. But the dramatic element in that literature extended far beyond the circle of regular plays, whether tragedies, comedies, or pastorals. It included the collections of short prose stories which appeared, or were published for the first time, in such numbers during the sixteenth century, the novels or novelettes of Ser Giovanni, Cinthio, Bandello, and their associates. These stories, consisting of the humorous and tragic incidents of actual life, told in a vivid and direct way, naturally attracted the attention of the dramatists. We know from the result that Shakespeare must have studied them with some care, as he derived from this source the plots and incidents of at least a dozen of his plays. Many of the stories, it is true, had already been translated, either directly from the Italian, or indirectly from French and Latin versions. Of Cinthio's hundred tales, however, only two or three are known to have been rendered into English; and Shakespeare derived the story of Othello from the untranslated part of this collection. Many of the Italian stories touched on darker crimes or more aggravated forms of violence than those naturally prompted by jealousy and revenge, and are indeed revolting from the atrocities of savage cruelty and lust related so calmly as to betray a kind of cynical insensibility to their true character. Shakespeare, however, with the sound judgment and strong ethical sense that guided the working of his dramatic genius, chose the better and healthier materials of this literature, leaving the morbid excesses of criminal passion to Webster and Ford. But the

Italian influence on Shakespeare's work is not to be estimated merely by the outlines of plot and incident he borrowed from southern sources and used as a kind of canvas for his matchless portraiture of human character and action. It is apparent also in points of structure and diction, in types of character and shades of local colouring, which realise and express in a concentrated form the bright and lurid, the brilliant and passionate, features of southern life. The great majority of the *dramatis personæ* in his comedies, as well as in some of the tragedies, have Italian names, and many of them, such as Mercutio and Gratiano on the one hand, Iachimo and Iago on the other, are as Italian in nature as in name. The moonlight scene in the "Merchant of Venice" is southern in every detail and incident. And as M. Philarète Chasles justly points out, "Romeo and Juliet" is Italian throughout, alike in colouring, incident, and passion. The distinctive influence is further traceable in Shakespeare's use of Italian words, phrases, and proverbs, some of which, such as "tranect" (from *tranare*), or possibly, as Rowe suggested, "traject" (*traghetto*), are of special local significance. In the person of Hamlet Shakespeare even appears as a critic of Italian style. Referring to the murderer who in the players' tragedy poisons the sleeping duke, Hamlet exclaims: "He poisons him in the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant and written in very choice Italian." In further illustration of this point Mr. Grant White has noted some striking turns of thought and phrase which seem to show that Shakespeare must have read parts of Berni and Ariosto in the original. No doubt, in the case of Italian poets, as in the case of Latin authors like Ovid, whose works he

was familiar with in the original, Shakespeare would also diligently read the translations, especially the translations into English verse. For in reading such works as Golding's *Ovid*, Harrington's *Ariosto*, and Fairfax's *Tasso*, he would be increasing his command over the elements of expressive phrase and diction, which were the verbal instruments, the material vehicle, of his art. But, besides studying the translations of the Italian poets and prose writers made available for English readers, he would naturally desire to possess, and no doubt acquired for himself, the key that would unlock the whole treasure-house of Italian literature. The evidence of Shakespeare's knowledge of French is more abundant and decisive, so much so as hardly to need express illustration. There can be little doubt therefore that, during his early years in London, he acquired a fair knowledge both of French and Italian.

But, while pursuing these collateral aids to his higher work, there is abundant evidence that Shakespeare also devoted himself to that work itself. As early as 1592 he is publicly recognised, not only as an actor of distinction, but as a dramatist whose work had excited the envy and indignation of his contemporaries, and especially of one so accomplished and so eminent, so good a scholar and master of the playwright's craft, as Robert Greene. Greene had, it is true, a good deal of the irritability and excitable temper often found in the subordinate ranks of poetical genius, and he often talks of himself, his doings, and associates in a highly-coloured and extravagant way. But his reference to Shakespeare is specially deliberate, being in the form of a solemn and last appeal to his friends amongst the scholarly dramatists to relinquish their connection with

the presumptuous and ungrateful stage. In his *Groatsworth of Wit*, published by his friend Chettle a few weeks after his death, Greene urges three of his friends, apparently Marlowe, Lodge, and Peele, to give up writing for the players. "Base-minded men, all three of you, if by my misery ye be not warned; for unto none of you like me sought those burs to cleave; those puppets, I mean, who speak from our mouths, those anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they have all been beholding; is it not like that you, to whom they have all been beholding, shall (were ye in that case that I am now) be both of them at once forsaken? Yes, trust them not; for there is an upstart crow, beautified in our feathers, that, with his *tiger's heart wrapt in a player's hide*, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you, and being an absolute *Johannes fac totum*, is, in his own conceit, the only Shakescene in a country. Oh that I might intreat your rare wits to be employed in more profitable courses, and let these apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions." This curious passage tells us indirectly a good deal about Shakespeare. It bears decisive testimony to his assured position and rapid advance in his profession. The very term of reproach applied to him, "*Johannes Factotum*," is a tribute to Shakespeare's industry and practical ability. From the beginning of his career he must have been in the widest and best sense a utility man, ready to do any work connected with the theatre and stage, and eminently successful in anything he undertook. In the first instance he had evidently made his mark as an actor, as it is in that character he is referred to by

Greene, and denounced for going beyond his province and usurping the functions of the dramatists. Greene's words imply that Shakespeare not only held a foremost place as an actor, but that he was already distinguished by his dramatic success in revising and rewriting existing plays. This is confirmed by the parodied line from the third part of "Henry VI.," recently revised if not originally written by Shakespeare. This must have been produced before Greene's death, which took place in September, 1592. Indeed, all the three parts of "Henry VI." in the revised form appear to have been acted during the spring and summer of that year. It is not improbable that two or three of Shakespeare's early comedies may also have been produced before Greene's death. And if so, his resentment, as an academic scholar, against the country actor who had not only become a dramatist, but had excelled Greene himself in his chosen field of romantic comedy, becomes intelligible enough. Even in his wrath, however, Greene bears eloquent witness to Shakespeare's diligence, ability, and marked success, both as actor and playwright. All this is fully confirmed by the more deliberate and detailed language of Chettle's apology already quoted. Of Shakespeare's amazing industry and conspicuous success the next few years supply ample evidence. Within six or seven years he not only produced the brilliant reflective and descriptive poems of "Venus and Adonis" and "Lucrece," but at least fifteen of his dramas, including tragedies, comedies, and historical plays. Having found his true vocation, Shakespeare works during these years as a master, having full command over the materials and resources of his art. The dramas produced have a fulness of life and a richness

of imagery, a sense of joyousness and power, that speak of the writer's exultant absorption and conscious triumph in his chosen work. The sparkling comedies and great historical plays belonging to this period evince the ease and delight of an exuberant mind realising its matured creations.

Nor after all is this result so very surprising. Shakespeare entered on his London career at the very moment best fitted for the full development of his dramatic genius. From the accession of Elizabeth all the dominant impulses and leading events of her reign had prepared the way for the splendid triumph of policy and arms that closed its third decade, and for the yet more splendid literary triumph of the full-orbed drama that followed. After the gloom and terror of Mary's reign the coming of Elizabeth to the crown was hailed with exultation by the people, and seemed in itself to open a new and brighter page of the nation's history. Elizabeth's personal charms and mental gifts, her high spirit and dauntless courage, her unfailing political tact and judgment, her frank bearing and popular address, combined with her unaffected love for her people and devotion to their interests, awakened the strongest feelings of personal loyalty, and kindled into passionate ardour the spirit of national pride and patriotism that made the whole kingdom one. The most powerful movements of the time directly tended to reinforce and concentrate these awakened energies. While the Reformation and Renaissance impulses had liberalised men's minds and enlarged their moral horizon, the effect of both was at first of a political and practical rather than of a purely religious or literary kind. The strong and exhilarating sense of civil and

religious freedom realised through the Reformation was inseparably associated with the exultant spirit of nationality it helped to stimulate and diffuse. The pope, and his emissaries the Jesuits, were looked upon far more as foreign enemies menacing the independence of the kingdom than as religious foes and firebrands seeking to destroy the newly established faith. The conspiracies, fomented from abroad, that gathered around the captive Queen of Scots, the plots successively formed for the assassination of Elizabeth, were regarded as murderous assaults on the nation's life, and the Englishmen who organised them abroad or aided them at home were denounced and prosecuted with pitiless severity as traitors to their country. Protestantism thus came to be largely identified with patriotism, and all the active forces of the kingdom, its rising wealth, energy, and intelligence, were concentrated to defend the rights of the liberated empire against the assaults of despotic Europe represented by Rome and Spain. These forces gained volume and impetus as the nation was thrilled by the details of Alva's ruthless butcheries, and the awful massacre of St. Bartholomew, until at length they were organised and hurled with resistless effect against the grandest naval and military armament ever equipped by a Continental power,—an armament that had been sent forth with the assurance of victory by the wealthiest, most absolute, and most determined monarch of the time. There was a vigorous moral element in that national struggle and triumph. It was the spirit of freedom, of the energies liberated by the revolt from Rome, and illuminated by the fair humanities of Greece and Italy, that nerved the arm of that happy breed of men in the day of battle, and

enabled them to strike with fatal effect against the abettors of despotic rule in Church and State. The material results of the victory were at once apparent. England became mistress of the seas, and rose to an assured position in Europe as a political and maritime power of the first order. The literary results at home were equally striking. The whole conflict reacted powerfully on the genius of the race, quickening into life its latent seeds of reflective knowledge and wisdom, of poetical and dramatic art.

Of these effects the rapid growth and development of the national drama was the most brilliant and characteristic. There was indeed at the time a unique stimulus in this direction. The greater number of the eager, excited listeners who crowded the rude theatres from floor to roof had shared in the adventurous exploits of the age, while all felt the keenest interest in life and action. And the stage represented with admirable breadth and fidelity the struggling forces, the mingled elements, humorous and tragic, the passionate hopes, deep-rooted animosities, and fitful misgivings of those eventful years. The spirit of the time had made personal daring a common heritage: with noble and commoner, gentle and simple, alike, love of queen and country was a romantic passion, and heroic self-devotion at the call of either a beaten way of ordinary life. To act with energy and decision in the face of danger, to strike at once against any odds in the cause of freedom and independence, was the desire and ambition of all. This complete unity of national sentiment and action became the great characteristic of the time. The dangers threatening the newly liberated kingdom were too real and pressing to

admit of anything like seriously divided councils, or bitterly hostile parties within the realm. Everything thus conspired to give an extraordinary degree of concentration and brilliancy to the national life. For the twenty years that followed the destruction of the Armada, London was the centre and focus of that life. Here gathered the soldiers and officers who had fought against Spain in the Low Countries, against France in Scotland, and against Rome in Ireland. Along the river side, and in noble houses about the Strand, were the hardy mariners and adventurous sea captains, such as Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, who had driven their dauntless keels into unknown seas, who had visited strange lands and alien races in order to enlarge the knowledge, increase the dominions, and augment the wealth of their fellow-countrymen. Here assembled the noble councillors, scholars, and cavaliers whose foresight and skill guided the helm of state, whose accomplishment in letters and arms gave refinement and distinction to court pageants and ceremonials, and whose patronage and support of the rising drama helped to make the metropolitan theatre the great centre of genius and art, the great school of historical teaching, the great mirror of human nature in all the breadth and emphasis of its interests, convictions, and activities. The theatre indeed was the living organ through which all the marvellous and mingled experiences of a time incomparably rich in vital elements found expression. There was no other, no organised or adequate means, of popular expression at all. Books were a solitary entertainment in the hands of few; newspapers did not exist; and the modern relief of incessant public meetings was, fortunately perhaps, an

unknown luxury. And yet, amidst the plenitude of national life centred in London, the need for some common organ of expression was never more urgent or imperious. New and almost inexhaustible springs from the well-heads of intellectual life had for years been gradually fertilising the productive English mind. The heroic life of the past, in clear outline and stately movement, had been revealed in the recovered masterpieces of Greece and Rome. The stores of more recent wisdom and knowledge, discovery and invention, science and art, were poured continually into the literary exchequer of the nation, and widely diffused amongst eager and open-minded recipients. Under this combined stimulus the national intellect and imagination had already reacted fruitfully in ways that were full of higher promise. The material results of these newly awakened energies were, as we have seen, not less signal or momentous. The number, variety, and power of the new forces thus acting on society effected in a short period a complete moral revolution. The barriers against the spread of knowledge and the spirit of free inquiry erected and long maintained by mediæval ignorance and prejudice were now thrown down. The bonds of feudal authority and Romish domination that had hitherto forcibly repressed the expanding national life were effectually broken. Men opened their eyes upon a new world which it was an absorbing interest and endless delight to explore,—a new world physically, where the old geographical limits had melted into the blue haze of distant horizons—a new world morally, where the abolition of alien dogma and priestly rule gave free play to fresh and vigorous social energies; and, above all, more surprising and mysterious than

all, they opened their eyes with a strange sense of wonder and exultation on the new world of the emancipated human spirit. At no previous period had the popular curiosity about human life and human affairs been so vivid and intense. In an age of deeds so memorable, man naturally became the centre of interest, and the whole world of human action and passion, character and conduct, was invested with irresistible attraction. All ranks and classes had the keenest desire to penetrate the mysterious depths, explore the unknown regions, and realise as fully as might be the actual achievements and ideal possibilities of the nature throbbing with so full a pulse within themselves and reflected so powerfully in the world around them. Human nature, released from the oppression and darkness of the ages, and emerging with all its infinite faculties and latent powers into the radiant light of a secular day, was the new world that excited an admiration more profound and hopes far more ardent than any recently discovered lands beyond the sinking sun. At the critical moment Shakespeare appeared as the Columbus of that new world. Pioneers had indeed gone before and in a measure prepared the way, but Shakespeare still remains the great discoverer, occupying a position of almost lonely grandeur in the isolation and completeness of his work.

Never before, except perhaps in the Athens of Pericles, had all the elements and conditions of a great national drama met in such perfect union. As we have seen, the popular conditions supplied by the stir of great public events and the stimulus of an appreciative audience were present in exceptional force. With regard to the stage conditions,—the means of adequate

dramatic representation,—public theatres had for the first time been recently established in London on a permanent basis. In 1574 a royal licence had been granted by the queen to the Earl of Leicester's company "to use, exercise, and occupy the art and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Interludes, and Stage Plays, and such other like as they have been already used and studied, as well for the recreation of our loving subjects as for our solace and pleasure when we shall think good to see them"; and, although the civil authorities resisted the attempt to establish a public theatre within the city, two or three were speedily erected just outside its boundaries, in the most convenient and accessible suburbs,—the Curtain and the Theatre in Shoreditch, beyond the northern boundary, and the Blackfriars theatre within the precincts of the dissolved monastery, just beyond the civic jurisdiction on the western side. A few years later other houses were built on the southern side of the river,—the Rose near the foot of London Bridge, and the Hope and Swan further afield. There was also at Newington Butts a place of recreation and entertainment for the archers and holiday people, with a central building which, like the circus at Paris Garden, was used during the summer months for dramatic purposes. These theatres were occupied by different companies in turn, and Shakespeare during his early years in London appears to have acted at several of them. But from his first coming up it seems clear that he was more identified with the Earl of Leicester's players, of whom his energetic fellow-townsmen, James Burbage, was the head, than with any other group of actors. To Burbage indeed belongs the distinction of having first

established public theatres as a characteristic feature of metropolitan life. His spirit and enterprise first relieved the leading companies from the stigma of being strolling players, and transferred their dramatic exhibitions, hitherto restricted to temporary scaffolds in the court-yards of inns and hostelries, to the more reputable stage and convenient appliances of a permanent theatre. In 1575 Burbage, having secured the lease of a piece of land at Shoreditch, erected there the house which proved so successful, and was known for twenty years as *the* Theatre, from the fact that it was the first ever erected in the metropolis. He seems also to have been concerned in the erection of a second theatre in the same locality called the Curtain; and later on, in spite of many difficulties, and a great deal of local opposition, he provided the more celebrated home of the rising drama known as the Blackfriars theatre. When Shakespeare went to London there were thus theatres on both sides of the water—the outlying houses being chiefly used during the summer and autumn months, while the Blackfriars, being roofed in and protected from the weather, was specially used for performances during the winter season. In spite of the persistent opposition of the lord mayor and city aldermen, the denunciations of Puritan preachers and their allies in the press, and difficulties arising from intermittent attacks of the plague and the occasional intervention of the court authorities, the theatres had now taken firm root in the metropolis; and, strong in royal favour, in noble patronage, and above all in popular support, the stage had already begun to assume its higher functions as the living organ of the national voice, the many-coloured mirror and reflection of the

national life. A few years later the companies of players and the theatres they occupied were consolidated and placed on a still firmer public basis. For some years past, in addition to the actors really or nominally attached to noble houses, there had existed a body of twelve performers, selected by royal authority (in 1583) from different companies and known as the queen's players. The Earl of Leicester's, being the leading company, had naturally furnished a number of recruits to the queen's players, whose duty it was to act at special seasons before Her Majesty and the court. But within a few years after Shakespeare arrived in London the chief groups of actors were divided into two great companies, specially licensed and belonging respectively to the Lord Chamberlain and the Lord Admiral. Under the new arrangement the Earl of Leicester's actors (who, as already stated, after the earl's death in 1588 found for a time a new patron in Lord Strange¹) became the servants of the Lord Chamberlain. James Burbage had already retired from the company, his place being taken by his more celebrated son Richard Burbage, the Garrick of the Elizabethan stage, who acted with so much distinction and success all the great parts in Shakespeare's leading plays. In order that the Lord Chamberlain's company might have houses of their own both for summer and winter use, Richard Burbage, his brother Cuthbert, and their associates, including Shakespeare, undertook in 1599 to build a new theatre on the bank side not far

¹ This is maintained by Mr. Fleay in his recent *Life and Work of Shakespeare*. But the history of the early dramatic companies is so obscure that it is difficult to trace their changing fortunes with absolute certainty.


from the old Paris Garden circus. We know from a subsequent document, which refers incidentally to the building of this theatre, that the Burbages had originally introduced Shakespeare to the Blackfriars company. He had indeed proved himself so useful, both as actor and poet, that they were evidently glad to secure his future services by giving him a share as part proprietor in the Blackfriars property. The new theatre now built by the company was that known as the Globe, and it was for fifteen years, during the summer and autumn months, the popular and highly successful home of the Shakespearian drama. Three years earlier Richard Burbage and his associates had rebuilt the Blackfriars theatre on a more extended scale; and this well-known house divided with the Globe the honour of producing Shakespeare's later and more important plays. Shakespeare's position indeed of actor and dramatist is identified with these houses and with the Lord Chamberlain's company to which they belonged. On the accession of James I., this company, being specially favoured by the new monarch, received a fresh royal charter, and the members of it were henceforth known as the king's servants. In the early years of Shakespeare's career the national drama had thus a permanent home in theatres conveniently central on either side of the river, and crowded during the summer and winter months by eager and excited audiences. Even before the building of the Globe, the house at Newington, where three of Marlowe's most important plays and some of Shakespeare's early tragedies were produced, was often crowded to the doors. In the summer of 1592, when the first part of "Henry VI.," as revised by Shakespeare, was acted, the performance

was so popular that, we are told by Nash, ten thousand spectators witnessed it in the course of a few weeks. It is true that even in the best theatres the appliances in the way of scenes and stage machinery were of the simplest description, change of scene being often indicated by the primitive device of a board with the name painted upon it. But players and playwrights, both arts being often combined in the same person, knew their business thoroughly well, and justly relied for success on the more vital attractions of powerful acting, vigorous writing, and practised skill in the construction of their pieces. In the presence of strong passions, expressed in kindling words and powerfully realised in living action, gesture, and incident, the absence of canvas sunlight and painted gloom was hardly felt. Or, as the stirring choruses in "Henry V." show, the want of more elaborate and realistic scenery was abundantly supplied by the excited fancy, active imagination, and concentrated interest of the spectators.

The dramatic conditions of a national theatre were indeed, at the outset of Shakespeare's career, more complete, or rather in a more advanced state of development, than the playhouses themselves or their stage accessories. If Shakespeare was fortunate in entering on his London work amidst the full tide of awakened patriotism and public spirit, he was equally fortunate in finding ready to his hand the forms of art in which the rich and complex life of the time could be adequately expressed. During the decade in which Shakespeare left Stratford the playwright's art had undergone changes so important as to constitute a revolution in the form and spirit of the national drama. For twenty years after the accession of Elizabeth the two roots whence the English

drama sprang—the academic or classical, and the popular, developed spontaneously in the line of mysteries, moralities and interludes—continued to exist apart, and to produce their accustomed fruit independently of each other. The popular drama, it is true, becoming more secular and realistic, enlarged its area by collecting its materials from all sources,—from novels, tales, ballads, and histories, as well as from fairy mythology, local superstitions, and folk-lore. But the incongruous materials were, for the most part, handled in a crude and semi-barbarous way, with just sufficient art to satisfy the cravings and clamours of unlettered audiences. The academic plays, on the other hand, were written by scholars for courtly and cultivated circles, were acted at the universities, the inns of court, and at special public ceremonials, and followed for the most part the recognised and restricted rules of the classic drama. But in the third decade of Elizabeth's reign another dramatic school arose intermediate between the two elder ones, which sought to combine in a newer and higher form the best elements of both. The main impulse guiding the efforts of the new school may be traced indirectly to a classical source. It was due, not immediately to the masterpieces of Greece and Rome, but to the form which classical art had assumed in the contemporary drama of Italy, France, and Spain, especially of Italy, which was that earliest developed and best known to the new school of poets and dramatists. This southern drama, while academic in its leading features, had nevertheless modern elements blended with the ancient form. As the Italian epics, following in the main the older examples, were still charged with romantic and realistic elements unknown to the classi-

cal epic, so the Italian drama, constructed on the lines of Seneca and Plautus, blended with the severer form, essentially romantic features. With the choice of heroic subjects, the orderly development of the plot, the free use of the chorus, the observance of the unities, and constant substitution of narrative for action were united the vivid colouring of poetic fancy and diction, and the use of materials and incidents derived from recent history and contemporary life. The influence of the Italian drama on the new school of English playwrights was, however, very much restricted to points of style and diction of rhetorical and poetical effect. It helped to produce among them the sense of artistic treatment, the conscious effort after higher and more elaborate forms and vehicles of imaginative and passionate expression. For the rest, the rising English drama, in spite of the efforts made by academic critics to narrow its range and limit its interests, retained and thoroughly vindicated its freedom and independence. The central characteristics of the new school are sufficiently explained by the fact that its leading representatives were all of them scholars and poets, living by their wits and gaining a somewhat precarious livelihood amidst the stir and bustle, the temptations and excitement, of concentrated London life. The distinctive note of their work is the reflex of their position as academic scholars working under poetic and popular impulses for the public theatres. The new and striking combination in their dramas of elements hitherto wholly separated is but the natural result of their attainments and literary activities. From their university training and knowledge of the ancients they would be familiar with the technical requirements of dramatic



art, the deliberate handling of plot, incident, and character, and the due subordination of parts essential for producing the effect of an artistic whole. Their imaginative and emotional sensibility, stimulated by their studies in southern literature, would naturally prompt them to combine features of poetic beauty and rhetorical finish with the evolution of character and action; while from the popular native drama they derived the breadth of sympathy, sense of humour, and vivid contact with actual life which gave reality and power to their representations.

The leading members of this group or school were Kyd, Greene, Lodge, Nash, Peele, and Marlowe, of whom, in relation to the future development of the drama, Greene, Peele, and Marlowe are the most important and influential. They were almost the first poets and men of genius who devoted themselves to the production of dramatic pieces for the public theatres. But they all helped to redeem the common stages from the reproach their rude and boisterous pieces had brought upon them, and make the plays represented poetical and artistic as well as lively, bustling and popular. Some did this rather from a necessity of nature and stress of circumstance than from any higher aim or deliberately formed resolve. But Marlowe, the greatest of them, avowed the redemption of the common stage as the settled purpose of his labours at the outset of his dramatic career. And during his brief and stormy life he nobly discharged the self-imposed task. His first play, "Tamburline the Great," struck the authentic note of artistic and romantic tragedy. With all its extravagance, and over-straining after vocal and rhetorical effects, the play throbs with true passion and true

poetry, and has throughout the stamp of emotional intensity and intellectual power. His later tragedies, while marked by the same features, bring into fuller relief the higher characteristics of his passionate and poetical genius. Alike in the choice of subject and method of treatment Marlowe is thoroughly independent, deriving little, except in the way of general stimulus, either from the classical or popular drama of his day. The signal and far-reaching reform he effected in dramatic metre by the introduction of modulated blank verse illustrates the striking originality of his genius. Gifted with a fine ear for the music of English numbers, and impatient of "the giggling veins of rhyming mother wits," he introduced the noble metre which was at once adopted by his contemporaries and became the vehicle of the great Elizabethan drama. The new metre quickly abolished the rhyming couplets and stanzas that had hitherto prevailed on the popular stage. The rapidity and completeness of this metrical revolution is in itself a powerful tribute to Marlowe's rare insight and feeling as a master of musical expression. The originality and importance of Marlowe's innovation are not materially affected by the fact that one or two classical plays, such as "Gorboduc" and "Jocasta," had been already written in unrhymed verse. In any case these were private plays, and the monotony of cadence and structure in the verse excludes them from anything like serious comparison with the richness and variety of vocal effect produced by the skilful pauses and musical interlinking of Marlowe's heroic metre. Greene and Peele did almost as much for romantic comedy as Marlowe had done for romantic tragedy. Greene's ease and lightness of touch, his

freshness of feeling and play of fancy, his vivid sense of the pathos and beauty of homely scenes and thorough enjoyment of English rural life, give to his dramatic sketches the blended charm of romance and reality hardly to be found elsewhere except in Shakespeare's early comedies. In special points of lyrical beauty and dramatic portraiture, such as his sketches of pure and devoted women and of witty and amusing clowns, Greene anticipated some of the more delightful and characteristic features of Shakespearian comedy. Peele's lighter pieces and Lyly's prose comedies helped in the same direction. Although not written for the public stage, Lyly's court comedies were very popular, and Shakespeare evidently gained from their light and easy if somewhat artificial tone, their constant play of witty banter and sparkling repartee, valuable hints for the prose of his own comedies. Marlowe again prepared the way for another characteristic development of Shakespeare's dramatic art. His "Edward II." marks the rise of the historical drama, as distinguished from the older chronicle play, in which the annals of a reign or period were thrown into a series of loose and irregular metrical scenes. Peele's "Edward I.," Marlowe's "Edward II.," and the fine anonymous play of "Edward III.," in which many critics think Shakespeare's hand may be traced, show how thoroughly the new school had felt the rising national pulse, and how promptly it responded to the popular demand for the dramatic treatment of history. The greatness of contemporary events had created a new sense of the grandeur and continuity of the nation's life, and excited amongst all classes a vivid interest in the leading personalities and critical struggles that had marked its

progress. There was a strong and general feeling in favour of historical subjects, and especially historical subjects having in them elements of tragical depth and intensity. Shakespeare's own early plays—dealing with the distracted reign of King John, the Wars of the Roses, and the tragical lives of Richard II. and Richard III.—illustrate this bent of popular feeling. The demand being met by men of poetical and dramatic genius reacted powerfully on the spirit of the age, helping in turn to illuminate and strengthen its loyal and patriotic sympathies.

This is in fact the key-note of the English stage in the great period of its development. It was its breadth of national interest and intensity of tragic power that made the English drama so immeasurably superior to every other contemporary drama in Europe. The Italian drama languished because, though carefully elaborated in point of form, it had no fulness of national life, no common elements of ethical conviction or aspiration, to vitalise and ennoble it. Even tragedy, in the hands of Italian dramatists, had no depth of human passion, no energy of heroic purpose, to give higher meaning and power to its evolution. In Spain the dominant courtly and ecclesiastical influences limited the development of the national drama, while in France it remained from the outset under the artificial restrictions of classical and pseudo-classical traditions. Shakespeare's predecessors and contemporaries, in elevating the common stages, and filling them with poetry, music, and passion, had attracted to the theatre all classes, including the more cultivated and refined; and the intelligent interest, energetic patriotism, and robust life of so representative an English audience supplied

the strongest stimulus to the more perfect development of the great organ of national expression. The forms of dramatic art, in the three main departments of comedy, tragedy, and historical drama, had been, as we have seen, clearly discriminated and evolved in their earlier stages. It was a moment of supreme promise and expectation, and in the accidents of earth, or, as we may more appropriately and gratefully say, in the ordinances of heaven, the supreme poet and dramatist appeared to more than fulfil the utmost promise of the time. By right of imperial command over all the resources of imaginative insight and expression Shakespeare combined the rich dramatic materials already prepared into more perfect forms, and carried them to the highest point of ideal development. He quickly surpassed Marlowe in passion, music, and intellectual power; Greene in lyrical beauty, elegiac grace, and narrative interest; Peele in picturesque touch and pastoral sweetness; and Lyly in bright and sparkling dialogue. And having distanced the utmost efforts of his predecessors and contemporaries he took his own higher way, and reigned to the end without a rival in the new world of supreme dramatic art he had created. It is a new world, because Shakespeare's work alone can be said to possess the organic strength and infinite variety, the throbbing fulness, vital complexity, and breathing truth of Nature herself. In points of artistic resource and technical ability—such as copious and expressive diction, freshness and pregnancy of verbal combination, richly modulated verse, and structural skill in the handling of incident and action—Shakespeare's supremacy is indeed sufficiently assured. But, after all, it is of course in the spirit and substance of his

work, his power of piercing to the hidden centres of character, of touching the deepest springs of impulse and passion, out of which are the issues of life, and of evolving those issues dramatically with a flawless strength, subtlety, and truth, which raises him so immensely above and beyond not only the best of the playwrights who went before him, but the whole line of illustrious dramatists that came after him. It is Shakespeare's unique distinction that he has an absolute command over all the complexities of thought and feeling that prompt to action and bring out the dividing lines of character. He sweeps with the hand of a master the whole gamut of human experience, from the lowest note to the very top of its compass, from the sportive childish treble of Mamilus and the pleading boyish tones of Prince Arthur, up to the spectre-haunted terrors of Macbeth, the tropical passion of Othello, the agonised sense and tortured spirit of Hamlet, the sustained elemental grandeur, the Titanic force, and utterly tragical pathos of Lear.

Shakespeare's active dramatic career in London lasted about twenty years, and may be divided into three tolerably symmetrical periods. The first extends from the year 1587 to about 1593-94; the second, from this date to the end of the century; and the third, from 1600 to about 1608, soon after which time Shakespeare ceased to write regularly for the stage, was less in London and more and more at Stratford. Some modern critics add to these a fourth period, including the few plays which from internal as well as external evidence must have been among the poet's latest productions. As the exact dates of these plays are unknown, this period may be taken to extend from 1608

to about 1612. The three dramas produced during these years are, however, hardly entitled to be ranked as a separate period. They may rather be regarded as supplementary to the grand series of dramas belonging to the third and greatest epoch of Shakespeare's productive power. To the first period belong Shakespeare's early tentative efforts in revising and partially rewriting plays produced by others that already had possession of the stage. These efforts are illustrated in the three parts of "Henry VI.," especially the second and third parts, which bear decisive marks of Shakespeare's hand, and were to a great extent recast and rewritten by him. It is clear from the internal evidence thus supplied that Shakespeare was at first powerfully affected by "Marlowe's mighty line". This influence is so marked in the revised second and third parts of "Henry VI." as to induce some critics to believe Marlowe must have had a hand in the revision. These passages are, however, sufficiently explained by the fact of Marlowe's influence during the first period of Shakespeare's career. To the same period also belong the earliest tragedy, that of "Titus Andronicus," and the three comedies—"Love's Labour's Lost," the "Comedy of Errors," and the "Two Gentlemen of Verona". These dramas are all marked by the dominant literary influences of the time. They present features obviously due to the revived and widespread knowledge of classical literature, as well as to the active interest in the literature of Italy and the South. "Titus Andronicus," in many of its characteristic features, reflects the form of Roman tragedy almost universally accepted and followed in the earlier period of the drama. This form was supplied by the Latin plays of Seneca, their darker

colours being deepened by the moral effect of the judicial tragedies and military conflicts of the time. The execution of the Scottish queen and the Catholic conspirators who had acted in her name, and the destruction of the Spanish Armada, had given an impulse to tragic representations of an extreme type. This was undoubtedly rather fostered than otherwise by the favourite exemplars of Roman tragedy. The "Medea" and "Thyestes" of Seneca are crowded with pagan horrors of the most revolting kind. It is true these horrors are usually related, not represented, although in the "Medea" the maddened heroine kills her children on the stage. But from these tragedies the conception of the physically horrible as an element of tragedy was imported into the early English drama, and intensified by the realistic tendency which the events of the time and the taste of their ruder audiences had impressed upon the common stages. This tendency is exemplified in "Titus Andronicus," obviously a very early work, the signs of youthful effort being apparent not only in the acceptance of so coarse a type of tragedy but in the crude handling of character and motive, and the want of harmony in working out the details of the dramatic conception. Kyd was the most popular contemporary representative of the bloody school, and in the leading motives of treachery, concealment, and revenge there are points of likeness between "Titus Andronicus" and the "Spanish Tragedy". But how promptly and completely Shakespeare's nobler nature turned from this lower type is apparent from the fact that he not only never reverted to it but indirectly ridicules the piled-up horrors and extravagant language of Kyd's plays.

The early comedies in the same way are marked by

the dominant literary influences of the time, partly classic, partly Italian. In the "Comedy of Errors," for example, Shakespeare attempted a humorous play of the old classical type, the general plan and many details being derived directly from Plautus. In "Love's Labour's Lost" many characteristic features of Italian comedy are freely introduced: the pedant Holofernes, the curate Sir Nathaniel, the fantastic braggadocio soldier Armado, are all well-known characters of the contemporary Italian drama. Of this comedy, indeed, Gervinus says: "The tone of the Italian school prevails here more than in any other play. The redundancy of wit is only to be compared with a similar redundancy of conceit in Shakespeare's narrative poems, and with the Italian style which he had early adopted." These comedies display another sign of early work in the mechanical exactness of the plan and a studied symmetry in the grouping of the chief personages of the drama. In the "Two Gentlemen of Verona," as Prof. Dowden points out, "Proteus the fickle is set against Valentine the faithful, Silvia the light and intellectual against Julia the ardent and tender, Lance the humorist against Speed the wit". So in "Love's Labour's Lost," the king and his three fellow-students balance the princess and her three ladies, and there is a symmetrical play of incident between the two groups. The arrangement is obviously more artificial than spontaneous, more mechanical than vital and organic. But toward the close of the first period Shakespeare had fully realised his own power and was able to dispense with these artificial supports. Indeed, having rapidly gained knowledge and experience, he had before the close written plays of a far higher character than any which even the

ablest of his contemporaries had produced. He had firmly laid the foundation of his future fame in the direction both of comedy and tragedy, for, besides the comedies already referred to, the first sketches of "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet" and the tragedy of "Richard III." may probably be referred to this period.


Another mark of early work belonging to these dramas is the lyrical and elegiac tone and treatment associated with the use of rhyme, of rhyming couplets and stanzas. Spenser's musical verse had for the time elevated the character of rhyming metres by identifying them with the highest kinds of poetry, and Shakespeare was evidently at first affected by this powerful impulse. He rhymed with great facility, and delighted in the gratification of his lyrical fancy and feeling which the more musical rhyming metres afforded. Rhyme accordingly has a considerable and not inappropriate place in the earlier romantic comedies. The "Comedy of Errors" has indeed been described as a kind of lyrical farce in which the opposite qualities of elegiac beauty and comic effect are happily blended. Rhyme, however, at this period of the poet's work is not restricted to the comedies. It is largely used in the tragedies and histories as well, and plays even an important part in historical drama so late as "Richard II." Shakespeare appears, however, to have worked out this favourite vein, and very much taken leave of it, by the publication of his descriptive and narrative poems, the "Venus and Adonis" and the "Lucrece," although the enormous popularity of these poems might almost have tempted him to return again to the abandoned metrical form. The only considerable exception to the disuse of rhyming metres and lyrical treatment is supplied by the

"Sonnets," which, though not published till 1609, were probably begun early, soon after the poems, and written at intervals during eight or ten of the intervening years. Into the many vexed questions connected with the history and meaning of these poems it is impossible to enter. The attempts recently made by the Rev. W. A. Harrison and Mr. T. Tyler to identify the "dark lady" of the later sonnets, while of some historical interest, cannot be regarded as successful. And the identification, even if rendered more probable by the discovery of fresh evidence, would not clear up the difficulties, biographical, literary, and historical, connected with these exquisite poems. It is perhaps enough to say with Prof. Dowden that in Shakespeare's case the most natural interpretation is the best, and that, so far as they throw light on his personal character, the sonnets show that "he was capable of measureless personal devotion; that he was tenderly sensitive, sensitive above all to every diminution or alteration of that love his heart so eagerly craved; and that, when wronged, although he suffered anguish, he transcended his private injury and learned to forgive".

Whatever question may be raised with regard to the superiority of some of the plays belonging to the first period of Shakespeare's dramatic career, there can be no question at all as to any of the pieces belonging to the second period, which extends to the end of the century. During these years Shakespeare works as a master, having complete command over the materials and resources of the most mature and flexible dramatic art. "To this stage," says Mr. Swinburne, "belongs the special faculty of faultless, joyous, facile command upon each faculty required of the presiding genius for

service or for sport. It is in the middle period of his work that the language of Shakespeare is most limpid in its fulness, the style most pure, the thought most transparent through the close and luminous raiment of perfect expression." This period includes the magnificent series of historical plays—"Richard II.," the two parts of "Henry IV.," and "Henry V."—and a double series of brilliant comedies. The "Midsummer Night's Dream," "All's Well that ends Well," and the "Merchant of Venice" were produced before 1598, and during the next three years there appeared a still more complete and characteristic group, including "Much Ado about Nothing," "As you Like It," and "Twelfth Night". These comedies and historical plays are all marked by a rare harmony of reflective and imaginative insight, perfection of creative art, and completeness of dramatic effect. Before the close of this period, in 1598, Francis Meres paid his celebrated tribute to Shakespeare's superiority in lyrical, descriptive, and dramatic poetry, emphasising his unrivalled distinction in the three main departments of the drama,—comedy, tragedy, and historical play. And from this time onwards the contemporary recognitions of Shakespeare's eminence as a poet and dramatist rapidly multiply, the critics and eulogists being in most cases well entitled to speak with authority on the subject.

In the third period of Shakespeare's dramatic career years had evidently brought enlarged vision, wider thoughts, and deeper experiences. While the old mastery of art remains, the works belonging to this period seem to bear traces of more intense moral struggles, larger and less joyous views of human life,



more troubled, complex, and profound conceptions and emotions. Comparatively few marks of the lightness and animation of the earlier works remain, but at the same time the dramas of this period display an unrivalled power of piercing the deepest mysteries and sounding the most tremendous and perplexing problems of human life and human destiny. To this period belong the four great tragedies—"Hamlet," "Macbeth," "Othello," "Lear"; the three Roman plays—"Coriolanus," "Julius Cæsar," "Anthony and Cleopatra"; the two singular plays whose scene and personages are Greek but whose action and meaning are wider and deeper than either Greek or Roman life—"Troilus and Cressida" and "Timon of Athens"; and one comedy—"Measure for Measure," which is almost tragic in the depth and intensity of its characters and incidents. The four great tragedies represent the highest reach of Shakespeare's dramatic power, and they sufficiently illustrate the range and complexity of the deeper problems that now occupied his mind. "Timon" and "Measure for Measure," however, exemplify the same tendency to brood with meditative intensity over the wrongs and miseries that afflict humanity. These works sufficiently prove that during this period Shakespeare gained a disturbing insight into the deeper evils of the world, arising from the darker passions, such as treachery and revenge. But it is also clear that, with the larger vision of a noble, well-poised nature, he at the same time gained a fuller perception of the deeper springs of goodness in human nature, of the great virtues of invincible fidelity and unwearied love, and he evidently received not only consolation and calm but new stimulus and power from the fuller realisation of

these virtues. The typical plays of this period thus embody Shakespeare's ripest experience of the great issues of life. In the four grand tragedies the central problem is a profoundly moral one. It is the supreme internal conflict of good and evil amongst the central forces and higher elements of human nature, as appealed to and developed by sudden and powerful temptation, smitten by accumulated wrongs, or plunged in overwhelming calamities. As the result, we learn that there is something infinitely more precious in life than social ease or worldly success—nobleness of soul, fidelity to truth and honour, human love and loyalty, strength and tenderness, and trust to the very end. In the most tragic experiences this fidelity to all that is best in life is only possible through the loss of life itself. But when Desdemona expires with a sigh and Cordelia's loving eyes are closed, when Hamlet no more draws his breath in pain and the tempest-tossed Lear is at last liberated from the rack of this tough world, we feel that, Death having set his sacred seal on their great sorrows and greater love, they remain with us as possessions for ever. In the three dramas belonging to Shakespeare's last period, or rather which may be said to close his dramatic career, the same feeling of severe but consolatory calm is still more apparent. If the deeper discords of life are not finally resolved, the virtues which soothe their perplexities and give us courage and endurance to wait, as well as confidence to trust the final issues,—the virtues of forgiveness and generosity, of forbearance and self-control,—are largely illustrated. This is a characteristic feature in each of these closing dramas, in the "Winter's Tale," "Cymbeline," and the "Tempest". The "Tempest"

is supposed, on tolerably good grounds, to be Shakespeare's last work, and in it we see the great magician, having gained by the wonderful experience of life, and the no less wonderful practice of his art, serene wisdom, clear and enlarged vision, and beneficent self-control, break his magical wand and retire from the scene of his triumphs to the home he had chosen amidst the woods and meadows of the Avon, and surrounded by the family and friends he loved.


We must now briefly summarise the few remaining facts of the poet's personal history. The year 1596 was marked by considerable family losses. In August Shakespeare's only son Hamnet died in the twelfth year of his age. With his strong domestic affections and cherished hopes of founding a family, the early death of his only boy must have been for his father a severe blow. It was followed in December by the death of Shakespeare's uncle Henry, the friend of his childhood and youth, the protector and encourager of his boyish sports and enterprises at Bearley, Snitterfield, and Fulbroke. A few months later the Shakespeare household at Snitterfield, so intimately associated for more than half a century with the family in Henley Street, was finally broken up by the death of the poet's aunt Margaret, his uncle Henry's widow. Although the death of his son and heir had diminished the poet's hope of founding a family, he did not in any way relax his efforts to secure a permanent and comfortable home for his wife and daughters at Stratford. As early as 1597, when he had pursued his London career for little more than ten years, he had saved enough to purchase the considerable dwelling-house in New Place, Stratford, to which he afterwards retired. This house,

originally built by Sir Hugh Clopton and called the "Great House," was one of the largest mansions in the town, and the fact of Shakespeare having acquired such a place as his family residence would at once increase his local importance. From time to time he made additional purchases of land about the house and in the neighbourhood. In 1602 he largely increased the property by acquiring 107 acres of arable land, and later on he added to this 20 acres of pasture land, with a convenient cottage and garden in Chapel Lane, opposite the lower grounds of the house. Within a few years his property thus comprised a substantial dwelling-house with large garden and extensive out-buildings, a cottage fronting the lower road, and about 137 acres of arable and pasture land. During these years Shakespeare made another important purchase that added considerably to his income. From the letter of a Stratford burgess to a friend in London, it appears that as early as 1597 Shakespeare had been making inquiry about the purchase of tithes in the town and neighbourhood. And in 1605 he bought the unexpired lease of tithes, great and small, in Stratford and two adjoining hamlets, the lease having still thirty years to run. This purchase yielded him an income of £38 a year, equal to upwards of £350 a year of our present money. The last purchase of property made by Shakespeare of which we have any definite record is at once so interesting and so perplexing as to have stimulated various conjectures on the part of his biographers. This purchase carries us away from Stratford back to London, to the immediate neighbourhood of Shakespeare's dramatic labours and triumphs. It seems that in March, 1613, he bought a house with a

piece of ground attached to it a little to the south-west of St. Paul's cathedral, and not far from the Blackfriars theatre. The purchase of this house in London after he had been for some years settled at Stratford has led some critics to suppose that Shakespeare had not given up all thought of returning to the metropolis, or at least of spending part of the year there with his family in the neighbourhood he best knew and where he was best known. The ground of this supposition is, however, a good deal destroyed by the fact that soon after acquiring this town house Shakespeare let it for a lease of ten years. He may possibly have bought the property as a convenience to some of his old friends who were associated with him in the purchase. In view of future contingencies it would obviously be an advantage to have a substantial dwelling so near the theatre in the hands of a friend. It was indeed by means of a similar purchase that James Burbage had originally started and established the Blackfriars theatre.

The year 1607-8 would be noted in Shakespeare's family calendar as one of vivid and chequered domestic experiences. On the 5th of June his eldest daughter Susanna, who seems to have inherited something of her father's genius, was married to Dr. John Hall, a medical man of more than average knowledge and ability, who had a considerable practice in the neighbourhood of Stratford, and who was deservedly held in high repute. The newly married couple settled in one of the picturesque houses of the wooded suburb between the town and the church known as Old Stratford. But before the end of the year the midsummer marriage bells had changed to sadder music. In December Shake-


if need be, enforcing his own. He sued his careless and negligent debtors in the local court of record, had various commercial transactions with the corporation, and took an active interest in the affairs of the borough. And he went now and then to London, partly on business connected with the town, partly no doubt to look after the administration and ultimate disposal of his own theatrical property, and partly it may be assumed for the pleasure of seeing his old friends and fellow-dramatists. Even at Stratford, however, Shakespeare was not entirely cut off from his old associates in arts and letters, his hospitable board being brightened at intervals by the presence, and animated by the wit, humour, and kindly gossip, of one or more of his chosen friends. Two amongst the most cherished of his companions and fellow-poets, Drayton and Ben Jonson, had paid a visit of this kind to Stratford, and been entertained by Shakespeare only a few days before his death, which occurred almost suddenly on the 23rd of April, 1616. After three days' illness the great poet was carried off by a sharp attack of fever, at that time one of the commonest scourges, even of country towns, and often arising then as now, only more frequently than now, from the neglect of proper sanitary precautions. According to tradition, the 23rd of April was Shakespeare's birthday, so that he died on the completion of the fifty-second year of his age. Three days later he was laid in the chancel of Stratford church, on the north wall of which his monument, containing his bust and epitaph, was soon afterwards placed, most probably by the poet's son-in-law, Dr. John Hall. Shakespeare's widow, the Anne Hathaway of his youth, died in 1623, having survived the poet seven years,



experiences a strong wave of home-yearning seems to have set in, which gradually drew the poet wholly back to Stratford. During the autumn visit connected with his mother's death Shakespeare must have remained several weeks at the New Place, for on the 16th of October he acted as godfather to the infant son of an old personal friend, Henry Walker, who was an alderman of the borough. The child was called William after his godfather, and the poet must have taken a special interest in the boy, as he remembered him in his will.

It seems most probable that soon after the chequered domestic events of this year, as soon as he could conveniently terminate his London engagements, Shakespeare decided on retiring to his native place. He had gained all he cared for in the way of wealth and fame, and his strongest interests, personal and relative, were now centred in Stratford. But on retiring to settle in his native town he had nothing of the dreamer, the sentimentalist, or the recluse about him. His healthy natural feeling was far too strong, his character too manly and well-balanced, to admit of any of the so-called eccentricities of genius. He retired as a successful professional man who had gained a competence by his own exertions and wished to enjoy it at leisure in a simple, social, rational way. He knew that the competence he had gained, the lands and wealth he possessed, could only be preserved, like other valuable possessions, by good management and careful husbandry. And, taught by the sad experience of his earlier years, he evidently guided the business details of his property with a firm and skilful hand, was vigilant and scrupulously just in his dealings, respecting the rights of others, and,

London experience we may well believe that he loved it still more with a deeper and calmer love of one who had looked through and through the brilliant forms of wealthy display, public magnificence, and courtly ceremonial, who had scanned the heights and sounded the depths of existence, and who felt that for the king and beggar alike this little life of feverish joys and sorrows is soothed by natural influences, cheered by sunlight and green shadows, softened by the perennial charm of hill and dale and rippling stream, and when the spring returns no more is rounded with a sleep. In the more intimate circle of human relationships he seems clearly to have realised that the sovereign elixir against the ills of life, the one antidote of its struggles and difficulties, its emptiness and unrest, is vigilant charity, faithful love in all its forms, love of home, love of kindred, love of friends, love of everything simple, just, and true. The larger and more sacred group of those serene and abiding influences flowing from well-centred affections was naturally identified with family ties, and it is clear that the unity and continuity of family life possessed Shakespeare's imagination with the strength of a dominant passion and largely determined the scope and direction of his practical activities. As we have seen, he displayed from the first the utmost prudence and foresight in securing a comfortable home for his family, and providing for the future welfare of his children. The desire of his heart evidently was to take a good position and found a family in his native place. And if this was a weakness he shares it with other eminent names in the republic of letters. In Shakespeare's case the desire may have been inherited, not only from his father, who had pride, energy, and ambition, but especi-



ally from his gently descended mother, Mary Arden of the Asbies. But, whatever its source, the evidence in favour of this cherished desire is unusually full, clear, and decisive. While the poet had no doubt previously assisted his father to retrieve his position in the world, the first important step in building up the family name was the grant of arms or armorial bearings to John Shakespeare in the year 1596. The father, it may be assumed, had applied to the Heralds' College for the grant at the instance and by the help of his son. In this document, the draft of which is still preserved, the grounds on which the arms are given are stated as two: (1) because John Shakespeare's ancestors had rendered valuable services to Henry VII.; and (2) that he had married Mary, daughter and one of the heirs of Robert Arden of Wilmcote, in the said county, gentleman. In the legal conveyances of property to Shakespeare himself after the grant of arms he is uniformly described as "William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman". He is so described in the midst of his London career, and this sufficiently indicates that Stratford was even then regarded as his permanent residence or home. In the following year another important step was taken towards establishing the position of the family. This was an application by John and Mary Shakespeare to the Court of Chancery for the recovery of the estate of the Asbies, which, under the pressure of family difficulties, had been mortgaged in 1578 to Edmund Lambert. The issue of the suit is not known, but, as we have seen, the pleadings on either side occupy a considerable space and show how resolutely John Shakespeare was bent on recovering his wife's family estate.

Turning to the poet himself, we have the significant fact that during the next ten years he continued, with steady persistency, to build up the family fortunes by investing all his savings in real property,—in houses and land at Stratford. While many of his associates and partners in the Blackfriars company remained on in London, living and dying there, Shakespeare seems to have early realised his theatrical property for the sake of increasing the acreage of his arable and pasture land in the neighbourhood of Stratford. In 1598, the year after the purchase of New Place, his family are not only settled there, but he is publicly ranked among the most prosperous and well-to-do citizens of Stratford. In that year, there being some anticipation of a scarcity of corn, an official statement was drawn up as to the amount of wheat in the town. From the list contained in this document of the chief householders in Chapel Ward, where New Place was situated, we find that out of twenty holders of corn enumerated only two have more in stock than William Shakespeare. Other facts belonging to the same year, such as the successful appeal of a fellow-townsmen for important pecuniary help, and the suggestions from an alderman of the borough that, for the sake of securing certain private and public benefits, he should be encouraged to complete a contemplated purchase of land at Shottery, show that Shakespeare was now recognised as a local proprietor of wealth and influence, and that he had so far realised his early desire of taking a good position in the town and neighbourhood. It will be noted, too, that all the leading provisions of Shakespeare's will embody the same cherished family purpose. Instead of dividing his property between his two

daughters, he left, as we have seen, the whole of his estate, the whole of his real property indeed, to his eldest daughter Mrs. Susanna Hall, with a strict entail to the heirs of her body. This indicates in the strongest manner the fixed desire of his heart to take a permanent position in the locality, and, if possible, strike the family roots deeply into their native soil. That this purpose was realised in his own case seems clear from the special respect paid to his memory. He was buried, as we have seen, in the chancel of the parish church, where as a rule only persons of family and position could be interred. His monument, one of the most considerable in the church, holds a place of honour on the north wall of the chancel, just above the altar railing. While this tribute of marked official respect may be due in part, as the epitaph intimates, to his eminence as a poet, it was no doubt, in a country district like Stratford, due still more to his local importance as a landed proprietor of wealth and position. Indeed, as a holder of the great tithes he was by custom and courtesy entitled to burial in the chancel.

If there is truth in the early tradition that Shakespeare originally left Stratford in consequence of the sharp prosecution of Sir Thomas Lucy, who resented with narrow bitterness and pride the presumption and audacity of the high-spirited youth found trespassing on his grounds, the victim of his petty wrath was in the end amply avenged. After a career of unexampled success in London Shakespeare returned to his native town crowned with wealth and honours, and, having spent the last years of his life in cordial intercourse with his old friends and fellow-townsmen, was followed to the

grave with the affectionate respect and regret of the whole Stratford community. This feeling was indeed, we may justly assume, fully shared by all who had ever known the great poet. His contemporaries and associates unanimously bear witness to Shakespeare's frank, honourable, loving nature. Perhaps the most striking expression of this common feeling comes from one who in character, disposition, and culture was so different from Shakespeare as his friend and fellow-dramatist Ben Jonson. Even his rough and cynical temper could not resist the charm of Shakespeare's genial character and gracious ways. "I loved the man," he says, "and do honour his memory on this side idolatry as much as any. He was indeed honest, and of an open and free nature, had an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle expressions." As the genius of Shakespeare united the most opposite gifts, so amongst his friends are found the widest diversity of character, endowment, and disposition. This is only another way of indicating the breadth of his sympathies, the variety of his interests, the largeness and exuberant vitality of his whole nature. He touched life at so many points, and responded so instinctively to every movement in the complex web of its throbbing activities, that nothing affecting humanity was alien either to his heart or brain. To one so gifted with the power of looking below the surface of custom and convention, and perceiving, not only the deeper elements of rapture and anguish to which ordinary eyes are blind, but the picturesque, humorous, or pathetic varieties of the common lot, every form of human experience, every type of character, would have an attraction of its own. In the view of such a mind nothing would be common or unclean. To Shakespeare all aspects of life, even the

humblest, had points of contact with his own. He could talk simply and naturally without a touch of patronage or condescension to a hodman on his ladder, a costermonger at his stall, the tailor on his board, the cobbler in his combe, the hen-wife in her poultry-yard, the ploughman in his furrow, or the base mechanicals at the wayside country inn. He could watch with full and humorous appreciation the various forms of brief authority and petty officialism, the bovine stolidity and empty consequence of the local Dogberries and Shallows, the strange oaths and martial swagger of a Pistol, a Bardolph, or a Parolles, the pedantic talk of a Holofernes, the pragmatism of a Polonius, or the solemn absurdities of a self-conceited Malvolio. On the other hand, he could seize from the inner side by links of vital affinity every form of higher character, passionate, reflective, or executive,—lover and prince, duke and captain, legislator and judge, counsellor and king,—and portray with almost equal ease and with vivid truthfulness men and women of distant ages, of different races, and widely sundered nationalities.

As in his dramatic world he embraces the widest variety of human experience, so in his personal character he may be said to have combined in harmonious union the widest range of qualities, including some apparently the most opposed. He was a vigilant and acute man of business, of great executive ability, with a power of looking into affairs which included a thorough mastery of tedious legal details. But with all his worldly prudence and foresight he was at the same time the most generous and affectionate of men, honoured and loved by all who knew him, with the irresistible charm that belongs to simplicity and direct-


ness of character, combined with thoughtful sympathy and real kindness of heart. And, while displaying unrivalled skill, sagacity, and firmness in business transactions and practical affairs he could promptly throw the whole burden aside, and in the exercise of his noble art pierce with an eagle's wing the very highest heaven of invention. That indeed was his native air, his true home, his permanent sphere, where he still rules with undisputed sway. He occupies a throne apart in the ideal and immortal kingdom of supreme creative art, poetical genius, and dramatic truth.

WHAT SHAKESPEARE LEARNT AT SCHOOL.¹

MANY students of Shakespeare on reading the above heading may be disposed to turn away, partly from the feeling expressed by Mr. Ward in his *History of English Dramatic Literature*, "that the vexed question as to Shakespeare's classical attainments is in reality not worth discussing," and partly from the conviction that whether of special interest or not the subject has been worked out. This feeling is certainly natural, and I must confess to having a good deal of sympathy with it myself. Those who are familiar with the treatment of Shakespeare's scholarship by Whalley and Upton, or even at times in the useful notes of the Variorum edition, may be pardoned for feeling only a languid interest in the question. Upton's cloud of references to Greek and Roman authors has often no real connection with Shakespeare at all: his favourite plan being to make an arbitrary change in the text by substituting some word or phrase, on which he can hang a string of classical quotations. And short of this extreme, the subject was often treated by the last century editors in a somewhat unfruitful and tedious way. The vague verbal coincidences and far-fetched allusions on the strength of which passages were often pronounced parallel, the minute but scrappy and irrelevant learning of the notes and annotations, are enough to inspire distaste of the whole subject. And it would not be

¹ *Fraser's Magazine*, Nov., 1879, Jan. and May, 1880.

surprising if ardent readers in an access of impatience at the critics and zeal for the poet should resolve to confine themselves to the text without note or comment of any kind. Indeed, this result has already been reached by at least one earnest student of Shakespeare. Mr. Harold Littledale, in his introduction to the Shakespeare Society's edition of the "Two Noble Kinsmen," expresses this feeling as follows: "Let us have various readings to any extent, and a carefully prepared text, but why must the wretched student of modern Shakspeare go wading through a vast quagmire of critical opinion and confutation, before he is allowed to catch a glimpse of the pure Shakspeare stream, as it gleams faintly and far out over the tangled mazes of this dismal editorial swamp?" However natural this feeling may be, it would not be easy to act on it just now, when, amidst the multiplication of Shakespeare Societies and the revival of different schools of Shakespearian criticism, most of the old questions are being reconsidered with a thoroughness that half atones for the almost inevitable minuteness and prolixity of such discussions. The question of Shakespeare's learning may, I think, fairly be reconsidered with the rest. For, although this particular sheaf of the great harvest has been, like so many others, pretty fully thrashed out, there are still a few golden grains remaining which it may be worth while to collect and preserve. This is the object of the present paper. I purpose gathering together some indirect points of evidence bearing on the subject that have hitherto been overlooked. The question of Shakespeare's classical quotations is a larger one, and in dealing with it I hope to throw some further light on the sources he employed as well as on his method of using them.



The materials for a trustworthy estimate of Shakespeare's attainments are to be looked for in various quarters which may be indicated at the outset. We have the indirect evidence supplied by the learned allusions scattered through his dramas, and the more direct evidence furnished by his earliest tragedy, "Titus Andronicus," and especially by his earliest comedy, "Love's Labour's Lost". One main object of the comedy being to satirise pedantry, to expose the tasteless display of learning, the mere parade of scholastic technicalities, the writer must obviously have had some personal knowledge of the thing paraded in order that the satire may be relevant and effective. So far the evidence here is more vital and direct than that afforded by incidental allusions to the mythology and legendary history of Greece and Rome. Shakespeare's genius seems first, as Coleridge suggests, to have dealt with the familiar elements of his own recent experience before going further afield to find in the wider world of home and foreign literature fitting subjects for its more arduous, mature and complex efforts.

In connection with this comes another important source whence materials for judgment may be derived—the probable course of instruction in Stratford Grammar School during the years when Shakespeare was a pupil there. I will deal with this point first, as its exposition may help to connect and illustrate the scattered and fragmentary evidence derived from an examination of his writings. Whatever differences of opinion may exist as to the actual extent of Shakespeare's classical knowledge, there can be no doubt that he had a very fair education; and it is almost equally certain that he must have obtained it in the grammar

school of his native town. About the date at which, according to the custom of the time, he would naturally be sent to school, his father, Master John Shakespeare, was not only a prosperous burgess, but the chief magistrate of Stratford; and we may be sure that he, as well as Shakespeare's gently descended mother, Mary Arden of the Asbies, would be most anxious that their eldest son should have the best education to be obtained in the locality. According to an authority I shall presently quote, children were often sent to the petty school, or English side of the grammar school, about the age of five, and after remaining there two years entered the grammar school proper, and began the study of Latin at seven. If they completed the full course of instruction, they remained till their fifteenth or sixteenth year, when they left, prepared for commercial or professional life, or, in special cases, for a course of university study. We know that, in consequence of the altered state of his father's circumstances, Shakespeare was withdrawn from school before he had completed the full term, and it is usually assumed on tolerably good grounds that he left in 1578, when he had just completed his fourteenth year. The question is: What did Shakespeare probably learn during the six or seven years he was a pupil in the grammar school of his native town? In other words: What was the course of instruction in a provincial grammar school like that of Stratford-upon-Avon in the second half of the sixteenth century? This question has recently been raised by Mr. Furnivall in his zeal to find out all that can be known about Shakespeare.¹ Mr. Lupton's reply to Mr. Furnivall's inquiry as to what Shakespeare pro-

¹ In the *Athenæum* for Oct. 7, 1876.

bably learnt at school contains some valuable notes of the old grammar school curriculum, derived from charters and foundation deeds, and some useful hints as to the directions in which further information might in all likelihood be obtained. These hints will probably be turned to good account by some of the many enthusiastic volunteers who are now happily engaged in exploring the obscure and difficult questions connected with Shakespeare's history and work.

Meanwhile, as a help towards the further elucidation of the subject, I may put together some notes of my own, made before the New Shakespearian Society had started into existence. It is perhaps appropriate that the question should be rediscussed in these pages, as by far the best things ever said on the learning of Shakespeare appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* forty years ago. In three papers, marked by his well-known learning and literary power, Dr. Maginn pierced the pedantic and inflated "Essay" of Farmer into hopeless collapse. In his own day it is true this once celebrated essay did some good by abating the extravagant claims on behalf of Shakespeare's scholarship made by Upton, Whalley and others. They tried to show that Shakespeare was, like Ben Jonson, a regularly built scholar, as familiar with the Greek dramatists, and as well read in the chief monuments of classical literature, as though he had gone through a distinguished university course. Their ingenious labours were indeed an amusing but desperate attempt on the part of academic critics to appropriate Shakespeare, to annex him as it were to the academic interest. The real, though perhaps hardly conscious aim was to show that Shakespeare, instead of being as some supposed an illiterate comedian and playwright,

was a scholarly and respectable person, who might have been admitted to dine in the hall of a college, and take part in the conversation of its learned members. In short, they claim for Shakespeare that he was worthy of academic recognition, and they do this on the narrow and technical grounds which in their day were almost the only ones that would have been generally recognised as relevant and valid. Upton, who was Prebendary of Rochester, virtually confesses this in the motto prefixed to his *Critical Observations* :—


“ Ne forte pudori
Sit tibi Musa lyræ solers, et cantor Apollo ”.

But the zeal of these academic apologists completely outran all critical discretion. Their method of proof was simply that of assuming that wherever Shakespeare referred to the incidents of mythological fable or heroic story, he must have gained his knowledge of them, at first hand, from classical sources. Allusions to the hunting expedition of Dido and Æneas, or to the desertion of the queen by the pious hero, were held to prove Shakespeare's familiarity with Virgil. If he speaks of “ Jove in a thatched house,” he must have read the fable of Baucis and Philemon, in the “*Metamorphoses*” of Ovid ; while an allusion to “ Circe's cup ” was supposed to show his acquaintance with the “*Odyssey*”. The refutation of these extreme positions was comparatively easy ; but Farmer, not satisfied with showing how baseless they were, went much further. He virtually maintained that, as Shakespeare might have obtained his classical knowledge from English sources, and in many cases really did so, he must have been ignorant of the originals and incapable of making any use of

them. "He remembered," says Farmer, "perhaps enough of his school-boy learning to put the *hig, hag, hog* into the mouth of Sir Hugh Evans, and might pick up, in the writers of the time or the course of his conversation, a familiar phrase or two of French and Italian, but his studies were most demonstratively confined to nature and his own language." Dr. Maginn has abundantly exposed the illogical character and false conclusions of Farmer's reasoning on the subject. His position is indeed as extreme on one side as that of the critics he attacked is on the other. As we shall presently see, the truth probably lies between the rival contentions. Shakespeare was neither so learned as the early critics assumed, nor so ignorant as the later tried to demonstrate. As an acute writer humorously expresses it: "Although the alleged imitation of the Greek tragedians is mere nonsense, yet there is clear evidence that Shakespeare received the ordinary grammar-school education of his time, and that he had derived from the pain and suffering of several years, not exactly an acquaintance with Greek or Latin, but, like Eton boys, a firm conviction that there are such languages".

This settlement of the question, though delightfully brief and pointed, and perhaps not very far from the truth, is nevertheless somewhat too summary for the purpose in hand. We must try to ascertain, if possible, what the ordinary grammar-school education of Shakespeare's time actually was, so as to answer, in some detail, the question as to what he would be likely to learn during the six or seven years' training in his native town. For this purpose, Carlisle's *Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools of England and*

Wales is no doubt useful, though after some examination, I may say, not so useful as might have been expected. It supplies, as Mr. Lupton says, materials for answering the question ; but these are hardly the best available, being for the most part too vague and general to be of special value. The deeds of founders, the school statutes and ordinances, while describing, in general terms, the kind of education to be given, rarely descend to particulars as to the actual curriculum of school teaching. They do not enable us to realise with sufficient distinctness the different grades of progress, the forms into which the schools were commonly divided, and the books that a boy would usually read in making his way from the lowest to the highest. I shall endeavour to throw some light on these points, by means of two works, once widely known, but now forgotten. The older of these is the *Ludus Literarius, or Grammar Schoole*, of John Brinsley, published in the year 1612. The expanded title—"Shewing how to proceede from the first entrance into learning, to the highest perfection required in the grammar schooles, with ease, certainty, and delight both to masters and schollars : only according to our common grammar and ordinary classical authours"—sufficiently illustrates the main design of the treatise. The *Ludus Literarius* is an acute and interesting work, full of illustrations of the actual teaching in the grammar schools of the time, as well as of fruitful suggestions for its improvement. Brinsley was not only an accomplished scholar and critic, but a born teacher, with genuine enthusiasm for the work and having ideas as to more simple and efficient methods of teaching far in advance of his own day, if not of ours. He belonged to a band of educational reformers, includ-



ing, among others, Mulcaster, Drury, Coote, and Farnaby, who, against the dominant influence of usage and tradition, strove to give more directness, vitality, and power to the school teaching of their day. Their zeal, as represented by Brinsley, was thoroughly patriotic, if not imperial in its scope and aim. In dedicating his translation of Ovid to Lord Denny, he says that he intended it

"chiefly for the poore ignorant Countries of *Ireland* and *Wales*, of the good whereof we ought to be carefull as well as of our oune : unto which I have principally bent my thoughts in all my grammatical translations of our inferior classical Schoole authors. For that as in all such places [English schools before referred to] so especially in those barbarous countries, the hope of the Church of God is to come primarily out of the Grammar Schooles, by reducing them first into civility through the means of schooles of good learning planted among them in every quarter ; whereby their savage and wilde conditions may be changed into true learning, according to the right judgment of our poet, which the experience of all ages hath confirmed."

Though it may be doubted whether the benefit of Brinsley's labours extended so far, the very excellent school-books he produced were fully appreciated, and did good service in England. These, in common with his more general work on teaching, have long since fallen out of knowledge.¹ How completely Brinsley is forgotten, indeed, is shown by the fact that in such standard works as Watt's *Bibliotheca* and Allibone's *Critical Dictionary of English Literature* the father is confounded with the son, a learned Presbyterian divine who, after having attained distinction in the Church,

¹ Mr. Furnivall gives some extracts from Brinsley in his introduction to *The Babees Book*, published by the Early English Text Society, in 1868.


was ejected from it by the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Both Watt and Allibone say that John Brinsley was born in 1600, and published his *Ludus Literarius* in 1612. One might have supposed that the mere juxtaposition of the dates would have excited suspicion and led to inquiry; but in many cases the perpetuation of a tolerably obvious error seems much easier than its correction.¹ As a matter of fact, about the date of his alleged birth (1601) Brinsley was appointed master of the grammar school of Ashby-de-la-Zouche, where he remained teaching with eminent success for sixteen years. Before his appointment, he had married a sister of the well-known Dr. Joseph Hall, afterwards Bishop successively of Exeter and Norwich. Hall was a native of Ashby, his father being local factor for the Earl of Huntingdon, whose chief seat was in the neighbourhood. As Brinsley had married before his appointment to the head-mastership, it seems probable that he had some previous connection with the school, possibly while it was under the management of Hall himself, who seems to have acted as master for a year or two in the last decade of the century. However this may be, the future bishop took an active interest in his brother-in-law's affairs. He writes a commendatory preface to his *Ludus Literarius*, in which he says that the new methods of teaching recommended in the work are not "meere speculation, whose promises are commonly as

¹ This confusion extends to Wood, if indeed it did not originate with him. In the *Athenæ Oxonienses*, Wood speaks of "that noted grammarian John Brinsley, sometime a schoolmaster, and minister in Great Yarmouth in Norfolk an. 1636". It need scarcely be said, however, that it was the son and not the father who was minister at Great Yarmouth. The mistake remains uncorrected in Bliss's critical edition of Wood. Indeed, the editor adds to the confusion by attributing some of the son's theological writings to the father.

large as the performance defective ; but such as to the knowledge of my selfe manie abler judges, have been, and are daily answered in his experience, and practice with more than usual successe". Hall also sent his nephew, young Brinsley, to Cambridge ; and at the end of his college course took him abroad as private secretary, when, in 1618, he attended the Synod of Dort on behalf of the English Church. The elder Brinsley appears to have been fortunate in gaining the friendship of several gentlemen of local eminence, including Sir George Hastings, brother of the Earl of Huntingdon, to whom his translation of Virgil's Eclogues is dedicated, and Lord Denny, to whom in the same way he dedicated his version of Ovid.

From the dates given above it will be seen that Brinsley was a contemporary of Shakespeare, and that his most active years as head-master run parallel with the most important and productive period of Shakespeare's dramatic career. His account, therefore, of the grammar-school teaching of the time is of the nature of contemporary evidence. The second volume, whose contents bear on the inquiry, is of somewhat later date, although, as we shall presently see, it supplies indirectly valuable evidence as to the state of school teaching in Shakespeare's day. This work is "A New Discovery of the old Art of Teaching Schoole : in four small Treatises ; concerning, A Petty School, The Usher's Duty, The Master's Method, and Scholastick Discipline : Shewing how Children in their playing years may Grammatically attain to a firm groundedness in an exercise of the Latine and Greek Tongues". The author, Charles Hoole, was a successful and celebrated school-master in the first half of the seventeenth century. He

was born at Wakefield in 1610, and educated in the grammar school of his native town. Like Brinsley, Hoole was connected with an eminent churchman and divine who subsequently rose to the episcopal bench—Dr. Robert Sanderson, the well-known casuist and logician. The bishop's guiding and helping hand was of great service to Hoole at the outset of life as well as in his subsequent career. We are told that, "by the advice of his kinsman, Dr. Robert Sanderson, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, he was sent to Lincoln College, Oxford, where he became proficient in languages and philosophy". The bishop was a native of Rotherham, educated in the grammar school of the town; and it seems to have been through his influence that young Hoole, soon after leaving Oxford, was appointed head-master of the school. Here he commenced his reforms, and drew up his first sketch of the "Improved Scheme of Teaching". The grammar school of Rotherham is of special interest from its close resemblance in history and general features to the grammar school of Stratford-upon-Avon. Both were pre-Reformation schools, founded and endowed about the same time by churchmen who were natives of the respective towns, and whose local patriotism and zeal for learning looked beyond the mere ecclesiastical horizon. Both schools were, however, connected with ecclesiastical foundations, that of Rotherham with the Collegiate Charge in the town, and that of Stratford with the Guild of the Holy Cross. In each case this ecclesiastical connection was the cause of their temporary ruin, the schools having fallen at the Reformation with the religious houses to which they were attached. The case of Rotherham was peculiarly hard, as it seems to



have been suppressed by sheer violence without even the usual pretexts of royal mandate or legal authority of some kind. Its hard fate, and indeed all distinct knowledge of the pre-Reformation school, have apparently fallen into oblivion. At least Carlisle, the highest authority on the history of our grammar schools, seems to know nothing of the earlier foundation, and gives the date of its restoration in the second half of the sixteenth century as that of the establishment of the school. It may be worth while, therefore, to extract Hoole's pathetic lament over its violent suppression, as the facts ought certainly to find a place in any new edition of Carlisle's valuable work. In a chapter devoted to the establishment and multiplication of good grammar schools, Hoole refers to the matter as follows:—

“I might here bewaile the unhappy divertment of Jesus Colledge in Rotherham, in which Town, one Thomas Scot, *alias* Rotherham (a poor boy in Ecclesfield Parish), having had his education, and being advanced to the Archbishoprick of York, in the time of Edward the fourth, did out of love to his country and gratitude to the Town, erect a Colledge as a Schoole for a Provost who was to be a Divine, and to preach at Ecclesfield, Laxton and other places where the Colledge demeans lay, and three Fellows, whereof one was to teach *Grammar*, another *Musick*, and the third *Writing*, besides a number of Scholars, for some of whom he also provided Fellowships in Lincolne Colledge in Oxford. But in the time of Henry the eighth, the Earle of Showesbury (who, as I have heard, was the first Lord that gave his vote for demolishing of Abbies), having obtained Roughford Abbey in Nottinghamshire, to the Prior whereof the Lordship of the Town of Rotherham belonged, took advantage also to sweep away the revenues of Rotherham Colledge (which, according to a rentall that I have seen, amounted to about £2000 per annum). And after a while having engratiated himself with some Townsmen and Gentlemen there about by erect-

ing a Cock-pit, he removed the Schoole out of the Colledge into a sorry house before the gate, leaving it destitute of any allowance, till Mr. West (that writ the *Presidents*) in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and when Mr. Snell was Schoolmaster, obtained a yearly salary of ten pounds per annum, which is since paid out of the Exchequer by the auditor of accounts. I remember how often, and how earnestly Mr. Francis West, who had been Clerk to his Uncle, would declaim against the injury done to that Schoole, which indeed (as he said) ought still to have been kept in the Colledge, and how, when I was a Schoolemaster there, he gave me a copy of the Foundation, and showed me some rentalls of Lands, and told me where many Deeds and Evidences belonging thereto were then concealed, and other remarkable passages, which he was loth to have buried in silence."

The main points in this account are confirmed by Camden, who, in his brief reference to the town, says:—

"From thence [Sheffield] Don, clad with alders and other trees, goeth to Rotheram, which glorieth in Thomas Rotheram sometime Archbishop of Yorke, a wise man, bearing the name of the towne, beeing borne therein, and a singular benefactor thereunto, who founded and endowed there a Colledge with three schooles in it to teach children Writing, Grammar, and Musicke, which the greedy iniquity of these our times hath already swallowed."¹

It is perhaps hardly yet too late for those who are locally interested in the school to inquire into the early and persistent misappropriation of its property and funds.


The grammar school at Stratford was suppressed in the usual way by royal mandate, but after being in abeyance for a few years it was restored by Edward VI., in the last year of his reign (1553). That of

¹ Thomas Rotherham, Archbishop of York, appears, it will be remembered, in "Richard III.," and in the crisis of their fate attempts to shelter the unhappy Queen and princes from the coming storm.

Rotherham was restored some years later, mainly, it would seem, through local effort. They were restored, of course, as Protestant foundations, and in their constitution and management followed the lines laid down for the numerous grammar schools established in the second half of the great Reformation century. What these lines were, so far as the course of instruction is concerned, we know perfectly in the case of Rotherham, as Hoole gives in detail the forms into which the school was divided, and the books that were used in each up to the time when he became head-master. And the schools of Rotherham and Stratford being alike in their general character, we may conclude with tolerable certainty that what was true of the one, in this respect, would also be true of the other. Hoole's *New Discovery*, it is true, was not published till 1659, but, as the title-page states, it was written twenty-three years earlier, and had been in private use, and become tolerably well known before it was given to the public through the press. It abounds, too, with references to the course of instruction in the Wakefield grammar school when the author was a pupil there under a master who presided over the school for upwards of fifty years. Hoole gives, at the beginning of the work, a list of the books generally used in the grammar schools of the country, and towards the end, as I have said, the course of instruction established in Rotherham School before he became head-master. These valuable details carry us back to Shakespeare's time; and as they agree, where comparison is possible, with the statements of Brinsley, as well as with the scraps of information to be derived from the early school charters and ordinances, we may accept them as a guide to the

course of instruction at Stratford. Even apart from this, we may be sure that whatever was generally true of country grammar schools in the early decades of the seventeenth century would be true of them in the later decades of the sixteenth. Public schools, as a rule, are about the most conservative of human institutions—so much so that, except at distant and revolutionary intervals, the introduction even of a new class-book is a work of extreme difficulty. The Public School Commissioners who sat in 1862 found that the lines of instruction laid down in the sixteenth century remained practically unchanged till within the memory of the present generation. The only considerable change that took place between Shakespeare's school days and those of Hoole was in the more general teaching of Greek, as a regular branch of school instruction. Leaving, however, his "less Greek," I shall confine myself to the "little Latin" which, according to his friend and fellow-dramatist, Shakespeare possessed. And on this head we may confidently assume that the course of instruction established at Ashby, at Wakefield, and at Rotherham would also be found established at Stratford-upon-Avon.

Brinsley and Hoole were educational reformers carrying on the work already begun by Ascham and Mulcaster. They write on the subject as Englishmen and Protestants, animated by the largest motives of patriotism and piety. They both urge that the diffusion of education, the multiplication of good schools, and the adoption of better methods of teaching are essential alike to the welfare of the Church and Commonwealth. The Reformation had, indeed, introduced elements of religious zeal and ecclesiastical rivalry into the



educational schemes of most European countries, the results of which were very marked in the second half of the sixteenth century. The organisation of Protestant instruction by Melancthon and Sturm roused in turn the activity of the Jesuits, and under their admirable management secondary education made enormous strides in most Catholic countries. Liberal and patriotic thinkers, it is true, felt the inherent defects of the Jesuit movement in relation to the higher ends of education. While their practical aims were far-sighted, the moral and intellectual horizon of these ecclesiastical experts was, it must be admitted, fatally narrowed by party and sectional barriers. And notwithstanding their rare professional aptitude and administrative skill, the hide-bound views and dogmatic aims of the Jesuits soon converted their system of secondary instruction into a hindrance rather than a help of real educational progress. But at the outset their thorough study of the subject led to the discovery and adoption of methods of teaching so skilful and efficient as to revolutionise the schools under their control and make them a dominant educational power in Catholic Europe. Brinsley shows a keen consciousness of this, and his Protestant zeal finds expression in the dedication of his work to the Princes of the Royal House. "Why," he asks, "should wee the liege subjects of Jesus Christ, and of his renowned kingdome, be overgone herein, by the servants of Anti-Christ, many of whom bend all their wittes and joine their studies, for the greatest advantage of their learning, even in the grammar schooles, only to the advancement of Babylon, with the overthrow of this glorious nation, and of all parts of the Church of Christ?" Hall, in

his commendatory preface, expresses the same feeling: "The Jesuits have won much of their reputation, and stollen many hearts with their diligence in this kinde. How happie shall it be for the Church and us if we excite ourselves at least to imitate this their forwardness? We may outstrip them if wee want not to ourselves: Behold here, not feete but wings offered to us." Hoole again reflects the later impulse given to Protestant education by the labours of Comenius. He is thus more decidedly a realist in education than Brinsley, who, influenced mainly by Sturm and Ascham, sympathises with the general views and aims of the humanists.

As reformers, however, both Brinsley and Hoole insist on substantially the same changes in the existing methods of instruction. It would be out of place to give these in any detail, and I shall notice them only as they throw light on the traditional methods of teaching, in the disadvantages of which Shakespeare, no doubt, fully shared. The great majority of the improvements suggested may be summed up in the comprehensive maxim: "Follow nature". "It is," says Hoole—

"Tully's observation of old, and Erasmus his assertion of later years, that it is as natural for a childe to learn as it is for a beast to go, a bird to fly, or a fish to swim, and I verily beleieve it, for the nature of man is restlessly desirous to know things, and were discouragements taken out of the way, and meet helps afforded young learners, they would doubtless go on with a great deal more cherefulness, and make more proficiency at their books than usually they do: And could the Master have the discretion to make their lessons familiar to them, children would as much delight in being busied about them, as in any other sport, if too long continuance at them might not make them tedious."

But in order to give free play to this natural love of learning, the teacher must excite the interest and develop the intelligence of the pupil. The interest of young minds is roused by appealing to their senses and imagination. In learning a language the true plan, therefore, is to begin with what is best known and most obvious, the names of common objects, familiar words and phrases, and the simplest grammatical elements in the mother-tongue. The knowledge of things must always go hand-in-hand with the knowledge of words, and in enforcing this Brinsley quotes of the acquisition of knowledge the philosophical aphorism so often employed in discussing its origin, "Nihil est in intellectu quod non prius fuerat in sensu". Hoole quotes the same maxim on the title-page of his translation of Comenius' *Orbis Pictus*, and devotes the preface to a detailed exposition of its meaning and application. Without interpreting the use of this maxim too absolutely, its adoption by each reformer sufficiently indicates that the main principle of the new methods recommended is that of proceeding from the concrete and particular to the abstract and general. What is taught in this way, that of advancing by easy steps from the known to the unknown, is easily learned. In opposition to this, Brinsley and Hoole complain of the time usually wasted in the senseless grinding of mere grammatical husks. They maintain that nothing can be more unnatural or repellent than the traditional plan of forcing a child to learn by heart a crude mass of abstractions and technicalities it cannot comprehend, and compelling it to repeat, in a dull mechanical routine, definitions and rules of which it understands neither the meaning nor the application. In efficient teaching the

intelligence of the learner must be excited and carried forward at every stage, by simplifying technicalities, explaining definitions, giving the reason of the rules, and illustrating their meaning and range by apt and copious examples.

Imitation is another natural principle which ought to be largely employed in the work of instruction. A boy should learn a new language as he learns his mother-tongue, by hearing it spoken and picking it up from colloquial use. Hence the value of using in the lower forms of a school familiar dialogues, vocabularies and phrase-books. The dialogues and phrases when thoroughly mastered should be committed to memory, and repeated in various forms and new combinations. For the same reason, the saving of time and needless labour, translations should, specially at first, be employed. On this point both Brinsley and Hoole strongly support Ascham; and the great majority of the numerous school-books they each produced are intended to popularise his plan and facilitate its adoption. Nearly all of these books are versions with explanatory notes of the authors usually read in the lower forms of the existing schools. In school discipline, again, the reformers rely on the natural principle of emulation and the love of praise, instead of on the old methods of terror and force. Sympathy and encouragement are to take the place of stripes and penalties. In cases of hesitation and mistake, the teacher should patiently try to understand and remove the pupil's difficulty, instead of resorting to the rougher and readier plan of a word and a blow. On this point I may give an extract from Brinsley that helps to explain the title of his work :—

"A sixth general observation, and of no less worth than any of the former, is this—That there be most needful care chiefly amongst all the youngest, that no one of them be any way discouraged, eyther by bitternesse of speech, or by taunting disgrace : or else by seuerity of correction, to cause them to hate the Schoole before they knowe it : or to distast good learning before they have felt the sweetnesse of it : but instead heerof, that all things in Schooles be done by emulation, and honest contention, through a wise commending in them every thing which any way deserveth praise and by giving preeminence in place, or such like rewards. For that adage is not so ancient as true; *Laus excitat ingenium*. There is no such a Whet-stone, to set an edge upon a good wit, or to encourage an ingenious nature to learning as praise is, as our learned Master Askam doth most rightly affirme. . . . 'Besides this also, this same strife for these Masteries, and for rewards of learning, is the most commendable play, and the very highway to make the Schoole-house to be *Ludus literarius*, indeed, a Schoole of play and pleasure (as was said), and not of feare and bondage ; although there must bee alwaies a meete and loving feare, furthered by a wise severitie, to maintaine authority, and to make it also *Ludus a non ludendo*, a place voyd of al fruitless play and loytering, the better to be able to effect al this good which we desire.'"

This extract points to the main object of both reformers. All their suggested improvements refer to methods of teaching and the details of school management, rather than to the course of instruction. They do not urge the introduction of new books, but simply a more efficient and intelligent use of those already established in the grammar-school curriculum. They show in detail how in the earlier classes a knowledge of grammatical elements, of the accidence and rules of construing, may be thoroughly acquired in half the time usually spent upon them ; how, as the pupil advances, the process of construing may, with proper helps and exercises, be enormously facilitated ; and how, in the higher forms, the reading of standard authors and the

writing of Latin prose and verse may be made not only a comparatively easy, but an attractive and invigorating discipline.

In order to give full effect to the improved methods, they both recommend a rearrangement of the classes, which in many existing schools seem to have been rather loose and straggling. Instead of a number of thin and irregularly sized classes, they urge the careful distribution of the pupils into compact and co-ordinate forms, and they show how a well-arranged system of classes and class-work will help to concentrate, economise and turn to the best account the teaching power of the school. Hoole goes into minute details as to the number of forms, and the work done in each. Brinsley often speaks of the lower and upper schools, and the authors read in them : and when the school was divided into six forms, each of these sections would contain three. Sometimes he speaks of the lower, the middle, and the upper school, and these sections would contain two or three classes each, according as the school was divided into six or nine forms. But whatever the number of forms, there is no difference whatever in the books used, and the authors read, at each stage of the pupil's progress. On this point both reformers are highly conservative. They even maintain that a book so unfitted in many ways for elementary use as *Lily's Grammar* must still be retained and taught in its integrity. This feature makes their list of school-books and authors not only instructive, but directly available, in the way of evidence, for the purpose in hand. They describe an established curriculum in which, as I have said, there would be hardly any change of importance since the days of Shakespeare's youth.

Brinsley gives a less detailed and co-ordinate enumeration of school-books; but his list is valuable, not only from its earlier date, but as an introduction to the fuller account supplied by Hoole. The difference between them arises from the fact that Brinsley nowhere attempts a full or formal enumeration of the books in use, but simply refers to them incidentally in connection with his own labours, and the improved methods of teaching he expounds and enforces. Hoole, on the other hand, gives, as I have said, two lists: one of the books used in the classes of Rotherham Grammar School early in the beginning of the seventeenth century, the other of the works used in the different grammar schools throughout the country. In the lower school the first class was of course engaged for a time in mastering the accidence and the rules of *Lily's Grammar*, and the bitterest complaints are made of the time usually wasted in the process. When the pupils had acquired some command over the grammatical elements, and advanced towards construing, Brinsley gives the following, as the list of authors read in the lower school: "Pueriles Confabulationculæ, Sententiae Pueriles, Cato, Corderius' Dialogues, Esop's Fables, Tully's Epistles gathered by Sturmius, Tully's Offices, with the books adjoined to them, the *De Amicitia*, *De Senectute*, and the *Paradoxes*, Ovid's *de Tristibus*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and *Virgil*". He also mentions, as helps at this stage, Drax's "*Manual of Phrases*," the "*Flores Poetarum*," and Cicero's "*De Natura Deorum*". In the upper school, while Ovid and Virgil are still read, he mentions among the more difficult authors taken up, Plautus, Horace, Persius and Juvenal. In reading these he recommends all

the helps which can be had, and enumerates the critical texts and commentaries that are likely to prove of the greatest service. In the higher forms, however, the boys are largely occupied in writing Latin epistles, Latin themes and verses, and in the rhetorical as well as the grammatical study of the Latin poets and prose writers. Hoole's first list is of books and authors commonly used in the grammar schools of the country. But, side by side with this, he gives another list, headed "Subsidiary Books," those which may be valuable for use and reference at each stage of the progress. Of this double list he speaks as follows :—

"The Authors which I prescribe to be used are partly classical, which every scholar should provide for himselfe, and because *these are constantly learnt in most Grammar Schools* I appoint them to be read at such times as are usually spent in Lessons. The Subsidiary Books are those which are helpful to children in performing their tasks with more ease and benefit; and, because all the scholars will not have like need of them, and they are more than any one will desire to buy, these should be laid up in the Schoole Library, for every Form to make use on as they shall have occasion."

To save space, I shall give only the list of books and authors commonly read in the grammar schools. The first form is occupied with the *accidence* and the "Sententiæ Pueriles"; the books in use in the second form were "Lily's Grammar," Cato's "Maxims," "Pueriles Confabulationunculæ," and the Colloquies of Corderius; in the third form, in addition to the grammar and Latin Testament, Æsop's Fables, the Dialogues of Castelio, the Eclogues of Mantuanus, and the Colloquies of Helvicus; in the fourth form, in addition to the Testament and grammar, the "Elements of Rhetoric,"

Terence, "The Selected Epistles of Cicero," Ovid's "De Tristibus," and "Metamorphoses," and Buchanan's Psalms; in the fifth form, in addition to the "Elements of Rhetoric," Livy's Orations, Justin, Cæsar, Florus, the Colloquies of Erasmus, and Virgil; in the sixth form, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, Lucan, Plautus, Martial, Cicero's Oations, and Seneca's Tragedies. The list of authors in the sixth form is rather a long one; but it would seem that while Horace, Juvenal, and Persius were thoroughly read, the others were only read in selected portions. On this point Hoole says, in his own detailed account of the work in this form: "As for Lucan, Seneca's Tragedies, Martiall, and the rest of the finest Latin poets, you may do well to give them a taste of each, and show them how and wherein they may imitate them, and borrow something out of them. Mr. Farnbie's notes upon them will be helpful; and Pareus or Taubman upon Plautus will make that some merry comedies of his may be easily read over".

To complete the evidence supplied by Hoole, I will give in his own words his account of the books and authors used in the Rotherham Grammar School before he became head-master. This second list is indeed of far higher interest and value for the purpose of this paper than the first, as it gives a vivid picture of the work actually done in the various forms of a country grammar school while Shakespeare was still alive. As will be seen, Hoole gives these details mainly for the purpose of showing that he had proposed no change in the course of instruction, but simply in the methods of teaching and school management:—

"That none may censure this Discovery which I have made to be an uncouth way of Teaching, or contrary to what had been afore-

time observed by my Predecessors of Rotherham School (which is the same that most Schole-Masters yet use), I have hereto annexed their method, just as I received it from the mouth of some Scholars who had been trained up therein all their time at that Schoole and hence sent to the University ; before I came hither to be master.

“The custom was to enter boyes to the Schoole one by one, as they were fit for the Accidents and to let them proceed therein severally, till so many others came to them, as were fit to be ranked with them in a form. These were first put to read the Accidents, and afterwards made to commit it to memory ; which when they had done, they were exercised in construing and parsing the examples in the English Rules, and this was called the first form : of which it was required to say four Lessons a day : but of the other forms, a part and a Lesson in the fore-noons, and a Lesson onely in the after.

“The second form was to repeat the Accidents for Parts ; to say fore-noons Lessons in *Propria quae maribus*, *Quae genus*, and *As in praesenti*, which they repeated memoriter, construed and parsed ; to say an after-noon’s lessone in *Sententiae Pueriles*, which they repeated by hart, and construed and parsed ; they repeated their tasks every Friday memoriter, and parsed their Sentences out of the English.

“The third form was enjoined first to repeat two parts together every morning, one out of the Accidents and the other out of that forementioned part of the Grammar, and together with their parts, each one was made to form one person of a verb Active in any of the four Conjugations : their fore-noons Lessons were in *Syntaxis*, which they used to say memoriter, then to construe it, and parse onely the words which contain the force of the Rule ; their fore-noons lessons were two dayes in *Aesop’s Fables*, and other two dayes in *Cato* ; both which they construed and parsed, and said *Cato memoriter* ; these Lessons they translated into English, and repeated all on Fridays, construing out of the Translations into Latine.

“The fourth form having ended *Syntaxis*, first repeated it, and *Propria quae maribus*, etc., together for parts, and formed a person of a verb Passive, as they did the Active before ; for Lessons they proceeded to the by-rules, and so to *Figura* and *Prosodia* ; for after-noon lessons they read *Terence* two dayes, and *Mantuan* two dayes,

which they translated into English, and repeated on Fridayes, as before.

"The fifth form said one part in the Latine, and another in the Greek Grammar together; their fore-noons Lessons was in Butler's Rhetorick, which they said memoriter, and then construed, and applyed the example to the definition; their after-noons Lessons were two days in Ovid's Metamorphosis, and two days Tullie's Offices, both which they translated into English; they learned to scan and prove verses in Flores Poetarum, and repeated their week's works on Fridayes, as before.

"The sixth form continued their parts in the Greek Grammar, and formed a verb Active at every part; they read the Greek Testament for fore-noons Lessons, beginning with Saint John's Gospel; their after-noons Lessons were two dayes in Virgil, and two dayes in Tullie's Orations. They construed the Greek Testament into Latine, and the rest into English.

"The seventh form went on with the Greek Grammar, forming at every part a verb Passive or Medium; they had their fore-noons Lessons in Isocrates, which they translated into Latine; their after-noon lessons were two days in Horace, and two days in Seneca's Tragedies; both which they translated into English.

"In the eighth form Hesiod was read in the morning, while Juvenal and Persius were construed in the after-noon."

[The ninth form was wholly occupied with Greek books.]

The evidence of these lists, given by eminent head-masters writing somewhat later than Shakespeare's school days, may be compared with the fragments of contemporary evidence contained in the earlier school charters and ordinances. The result would, I venture to think, be a strong confirmation of their substantial validity for the purpose in hand. As an illustration, I give below¹ from the early school statutes one that

¹ "These books," says the statute, "shall only be read in the said School, except it shall be otherwise appointed hereafter, by those that have authority:—

The A B C in English.

The Catechism in English, set forth by public authority.

contains perhaps the most detailed list of books and authors to be found in Carlisle's collection—that of the Free Grammar School of St. Bees in Cumberland, drawn up in 1583. This list, having been prepared on authority within five or six years after Shakespeare left school, may be accepted as representing fairly enough the books and authors usually read in the country grammar schools. It will be seen that in this list the modern Latin poets used in the schools are enumerated separately, Mantuanus coming first. The second name is printed by Carlisle as Pallurgenius, but this is evidently a mistake for Palingenius, whose *Zodiac of Life* was a very popular book in the sixteenth century. For the rest, the authors enumerated both in prose and verse correspond substantially with the lists already given.

From these various sources, contemporary and quasi-

The Psalter and Book of Common Prayer		} in English.
The New Testament		
The Queen's Grammar, with the Accidence.		
The Small Catechism in Latin, publicly authorised.		
Confabulationes Pueriles.		
Prose	{	Aesoppi Fabulae.
		{
	Officiorum.	
	De Amicitia.	
	De Senectute.	
	Tusculanarum Questionum.	
	{	Orations, or any other of his works.
		Salustius.
		Justinus.
		Commentarii Caesaris.
		Q. Curtius.
Verse		{
	B. Mantuanus.	
	Terentius.	
	Palingenius.	
	Virgilius.	
	Buchanani Scripta.	
	Horatius.	
	Sedulius.	
{	Ovidii Metamorphoses.	
	Prudentius."	
{	Ovid : ' de Tristibus '.	

contemporary, we may form a trustworthy general estimate of Shakespeare's course of instruction during his school days. At that time, as we have seen, boys usually went to the grammar school about six or at latest seven years of age, and entered at once upon the accidence. In his first year, therefore, Shakespeare would be occupied with the accidence and grammar. In his second year, with the elements of grammar, he would read some manual of short phrases and familiar dialogues, and these committed to memory would be colloquially employed in the work of the school; in his third year, if not before, he would take up Cato's *Maxims* and *Æsop's Fables*; in his fourth, while continuing the *Fables*, he would read the *Eclogues* of Mantuanus, parts of Ovid, some of Cicero's *Epistles*, and probably one of his shorter treatises; in his fifth year he would continue the reading of Ovid's "*Metamorphoses*," with parts of Virgil and Terence; and in the sixth, Horace, Plautus, and probably part of Juvenal and Persius, with some of Cicero's *Orations* and Seneca's *Tragedies*. In going through such a course, unless the teaching at Stratford was exceptionally inefficient, the boy must have made some progress in several of these authors, and acquired sufficient knowledge of the language to read fairly well at sight the more popular poets and prose writers, such as Ovid and Cicero. The masters of the school during the time Shakespeare attended it would seem, however, to have been at least of average attainments and ability, as they rapidly gained promotion. No fewer than three held the post during the decade from 1570 to 1580. In the first two years Walter Roche, for the next five, the most important in Shakespeare's school history, Thomas

Hunt, and during the last three years Thomas Jenkins were head-masters in the school.

About the time that Shakespeare's parents would be thinking of sending their eldest boy to school there seems, moreover, to have been a good deal of local activity in relation to the building, the old school-house having been put into thorough repair, and changes made in the internal arrangements for the purpose of rendering it more airy and healthful. In the chamberlain's accounts for the year 1568 mention is made of sums expended for "repairing the scole," "dressing and sweeping the scole-house," "ground-sellynge the old scole, and taking down the sollar over the school," expressions which warrant the conclusion that there was not only a school-house existing in the early years of our poet, but that it had even then considerable pretensions to antiquity. We may reasonably infer that as it had been put into repair in the year 1568, it continued in a state available for use until it was repaired again about the year 1594 or 1595,¹ when the chapel of the guild was temporarily used, as it probably had been more than once before, instead of the school-house. The "sollar" referred to in this extract was a small story, in many cases a loft or garret; and taking away the sollar over the school-house would, I suppose, indicate that it was heightened and possibly newly roofed, as well as partially refloored. Shakespeare's father had been chosen town bailiff during the year in which these improvements were made, and it would be part of his official duty to inspect

¹ Stratford-upon-Avon Grammar School by King Edward VI. Report of the Proceedings at the Tercentenary Meeting, June 30, 1853, pp. 39-40.

them during their progress and see that the work was well done. As a prosperous burgess and magistrate, he would be proud of the resuscitated foundation connected with the Ancient Guild of the Holy Cross, and now known as the "King's New School," and would naturally regard with special interest the renovated building where his son was soon to feel the magical touch of that lettered awakening which in a thousand diversified forms was everywhere quickening the latent seeds of genius into fruitful life. The new school in the old school-house was, indeed, at once the symbol and meeting-place not only of the two civilisations, the Classical and the Christian, which have determined the character of modern Europe, but of the two main currents of the latter, the Catholic and the Protestant, which are found united in the most brilliant and productive period of English literature. Associations connected with these great streams of influence were concentrated in the chapel and school-house of the guild, and reflected from the most familiar objects and occupations of both, from the ancient doorway through which the boy passed out of the sunlight into the shadows and subdued hum of the school, from the rude oak forms and desks at which he sat, from the pater noster he pattered, and the catechism which by royal authority he was obliged to learn, from the well-thumbed books of his weather-stained satchel over which he pored, from the milder or more severe exhortations and "lectures" of Thomas Hunt, "artsman" and headmaster, and, perhaps most vividly of all, from the fine series of paintings on the chapel walls, depicting with archaic faith and power the "Invention" of the Holy Cross, some of them already half-defaced by the pious

vandalism of unsparing religious zeal. The whole round of school influences and associations—from the simple piety of the cris-cross row and the elementary difficulties of the primer, to the harsh constructions of Persius and the pagan horrors of Seneca's "Medea" and "Thyestes"—must have melted as years went by, almost unconsciously perhaps, into the capacious and retentive mind of the marvellous boy, and helped with the life of nature in the fields and woods, and the civic stir and social movements of the town, to prepare and qualify him for his future work.

II.

HAVING now gained a general idea of Shakespeare's course of school instruction, we have next to inquire whether his writings supply any evidence of his having passed through such a course. With regard to its first or elementary stage, even Farmer admits that Shakespeare must have been well drilled in the *accidence*, and that he recollected it vividly enough to use his knowledge with dramatic propriety and effect. Sir Hugh Evans's examination of Mrs. Page's boy in the "Merry Wives of Windsor" accurately represents, indeed, the kind of cumbrous catechetical exercise in the *accidence* which prevailed at the time in all the grammar schools. Sir Hugh's explanation of the holiday that "Master Slender is let the boys leave to play," and Mrs. Page's complaint, "Sir Hugh, my husband says my son profits nothing in this world at his book. I pray you, ask him some questions in the *accidence*," are vivid touches illustrating the relation between masters, pupils and parents common enough in Shakespeare's day, and

pathetically lamented both by Brinsley and Hoole, but as true probably now as then. Shakespeare's familiarity with *Lily's Grammar* is shown in many ways ; amongst others by his quotation of some of its more striking examples, such as " *Vir sapit qui pauca loquitur* ".

The next stage to the accidence and grammar is that of vocabularies, phrase-books and familiar dialogues ; and this stage is amply illustrated in the scenes between Sir Nathaniel and Holofernes in " *Love's Labour's Lost* ". The schoolmaster's display of Latin words and phrases in the following dialogue are fragments from the school vocabularies and phrase-books with which his " *ventricle of memory* " is stuffed :—

" *Hol.* The deer was, as you know, in *sanguis*,—blood ; ripe as a pome-water, who now hangeth like a jewel in the ear of *cælum*, the sky, the welkin, the heaven ; and anon falleth like a crab on the face of *terra*, the soil, the land, the earth.

" *Nath.* Truly, Master Holofernes, the epithets are sweetly varied, like a scholar at the least : but, sir, I assure ye, it was a buck of the first head.

" *Hol.* Sir Nathaniel, *haud credo*.

" *Dull.* 'Twas not a *haud credo* ; 'twas a pricket.

" *Hol.* Most barbarous intimation ! yet a kind of insinuation, as it were, *in via*, in way, of explication ; *facere*, as it were, replication, or, rather, *ostentare*, to show, as it were, his inclination,—after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or, rather, unlettered, or, ratherest, unconfirmed fashion, to insert again my *haud credo* for a deer.

" *Dull.* I said the deer was not a *haud credo* ; 'twas a pricket.

" *Hol.* Twice-sod simplicity, *bis coctus* !

O thou monster Ignorance, how deformed dost thou look ! "

In the synonyms for *cælum* and *terra* the pedantic master literally parades the school method by which boys were required to note down Latin words and phrases and give as many English equivalents for them

as possible. The next scene between the curate and the pedant recalls and exemplifies the familiar Latin dialogues which, as we have seen, formed at this stage an important part of the regular school work. It will be remembered that these learned men were walking in the park after having dined with the father of one of the school pupils, where it had been previously arranged that, if the curate would gratify the table with a grace, the pedant would undertake to prove that Biron's love verses, which they had read together, were "very unlearned, neither savouring of poetry, wit, nor invention".

"*Hol. Satis quod sufficit.*

"*Nath.* I praise God for you, sir: your reasons at dinner have been sharp and sententious; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy. I did converse this *quondam* day with a companion of the king's who is intituled, nominated or called, Don Adriano de Armado.

"*Hol. Novi hominem tanquam te:* his humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed, his eye ambitious, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous and thraso-nical. He is too picked, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it.

"*Nath.* A most singular and choice epithet. [*Takes out his table-book.*]

"*Hol.* He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. I abhor such fanatical phantasms, such insociable and point-devise companions; such rackers of orthography, as to speak 'dout,' fine, when he should say 'doubt'; 'det,' when he should pronounce 'debt,'—d,e,b,t, not d,e,t; he clepeth a 'calf,' 'cauf'; 'half,' 'hauf'; 'neighbour' *vocatur* 'nebour'; 'neigh' abbreviated 'ne'. This is abominable,—which he would call abominable; it insinuateth one of *insanire*; *ne intelligis*, domine? to wax frantic, lunatic.

"*Nath. Laus Deo, bone intelligo.*

"*Hol. Bone!*—bone for bene: Priscian a little scratched; 'twill serve.

"*Nath. Videsne quis venit?*

"*Hol. Video, et gaudeo.*

Enter ARMADO.

"*Arm. Chirrah!* [*To* *MOTH.*

"*Hol. Quare 'chirrah,' not 'sirrah'.*"

These scraps of Latin dialogue exemplify the technical Latin intercourse between master and pupils in the school work, as well as the formal colloquies the latter were required to prepare as exercises in the second stage of their course. In one of the manuals of the latter, entitled "*Familiares Colloquendi Formulæ in Usum Scholarum Concinnatæ*," I find under the first section, headed, "*Scholasticæ Belonging to the School*," the following: "Who comes to meet us? *Quis obviam venit?* He speaks improperly, *Hic incongruè loquitur*; He speaks false Latin, *Diminuit Prisciani caput*; 'Tis barbarous Latin, *Olet barbariem*." In the scene just quoted from it will be remembered Holofernes, in reply to Costard's "*Ad dunghill* at the fingers' ends, as they say," says, "O I smell false Latin, 'dunghill' for *unquem*".

In relation to the next stage, that of Cato's *Maxims* and *Æsop's Fables*, the proofs of Shakespeare's familiarity with these school-books, if somewhat scattered and allusive, are nevertheless various and abundant. But it is the less necessary to go minutely into the evidence on this head as Mr. Henry Green, in his work on *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers*, has detailed the illustrations with almost exhaustive minuteness. In the wider meaning and more general application of the term almost all the school-books used

at this stage may be summed up under the head of emblems. An emblem is not unfrequently at once an illustrated maxim and a condensed fable. The same epigrammatic or proverbial truth is often found expressed in the three forms of maxim, emblem, and fable. Cato's *Maxims* and Æsop's *Fables* were accordingly often published as school-books with illustrated cuts, engravings, or emblems. The fly-leaf of the school colloquies just referred to contains an advertisement of "*Æsop's Fables with their morals in prose and verse, illustrated with a great number of pictures and emblems*". There is a passage in Hoole also which suggests that Shakespeare in reading Æsop may have acquired some knowledge of the "*Gesta Romanorum*" during his school days. Speaking of the third form he says :—

"Their forenoone lessons may be in *Æsop's Fables*, which is indeed a book of great antiquity and of more solid learning than most men think. For in it many good lectures in morality which would not (perhaps) have been listened to, if they had been delivered in a plain and naked manner, being handsomely made up and vented in an Apologue, do insinuate themselves into every mans minde. And for this reason perhaps it is that I finde it, and *Gesta Romanorum* (which is so generally pleasing to our Countrey people) to have been printed and bound up together in Latine, even when the Latine was yet in its drosse."

Alciat's was the most popular of the emblem books so common in the sixteenth century, and Mr. Green has shown how familiar Shakespeare was with his work. Now Hoole enumerates Alciat's emblems in his list of subsidiary books, and refers to it more than once as a manual used in the schools. Thus, in dealing with the work of the fourth form, he says :—

"After they have become acquainted with a variety of metre you may cause them to turn a fable of Æsop into what kind of verse you please to appoint them, and sometimes you may let them translate some select Epigrams out of those collected by Mr. Farnaby, or some emblems out of Alciat or the like flourishes of wit which you think will more delight them and help their fancies".

Elsewhere he recommends that, as a help to making themes and verses, the boys of the fifth form should have a commonplace book in which they should write the heads set down by Farnaby in his *Index Rhetoricus*, and busy themselves on Tuesdays and Thursdays afternoons in collecting short histories out of Florus, Cæsar, Livy, and others, Apologues and Fables out of Æsop, Phædrus, and Ovid, and Emblems and Symbols out of Alciat and Beza.

In the next stage of his school career, Shakespeare would begin the reading of Ovid, parts of the "*De Tristibus*" and the "*Metamorphoses*," and with Ovid he would take up the selected Epistles of Cicero, and the Eclogues of Baptista Mantuanus. The evidence as to the last point is supplied by the well-known quotation from the Eclogues in "*Love's Labour's Lost*". But how imperfectly the subject of Shakespeare's scholarship has hitherto been worked out is, I think, shown by the fact that no critic or commentator seems to have ascertained with any certainty whether the Eclogues were in common use as a school-book or not. Malone, indeed, says that from a passage in Nash's Apology, "the Eclogues of Mantuanus appear to have been a school-book in our author's time". And Warburton gives at second hand a quotation from Farnaby's introduction to Martial, which certainly illustrates the absurdly high estimation in which the Mantuan was

held. So popular was Mantuanus in the sixteenth century that, according to Farnaby, the pedants had no hesitation in preferring the "*Fauste, precor, gelida*" to the "*Arma virumque cano*"; in other words, the Eclogues of Mantuanus to the *Æneid* of Virgil. Several editions of the Eclogues in the original, and more than one translation, had been published in England before Shakespeare's school days, and it would seem, from numerous and laudatory references in contemporary literature, that the author was, for a time at least, as much in vogue here as on the Continent. Almost the only exception to the general eulogy is found in the pages of Drayton, Shakespeare's friend and fellow-countryman. In his "*Heroic Epistles*" he makes one of the heroines stigmatise the Mantuan as "*foul-mouthed*" on the strength of an Eclogue (the fourth), in which, the monk getting the better of the poet, he "*bitterly inveigheth against womankind*". In the notes, however, Drayton himself justifies the favourite author, maintaining that the invective, though severe, is well deserved.

Why Mantuanus should have become so popular as to acquire the reputation of a classic, and become established as a text-book in the secondary schools, it is not very easy to understand. Much of his voluminous Latin poetry is of little value; and although his Eclogues show considerable facility both of conception and execution, they want the rustic feeling and picturesque touch, as well as the unity and finish, of the true Bucolic. That they were among the earliest modern Eclogues was no doubt a point in their favour. And the birthplace of the writer would count for something in the comparison of his work with that of Virgil. But

that on these, or indeed on any conceivable grounds, the Carmelite monk should have been seriously compared to the great Augustan poet, and ranked as not inferior, seems almost incredible. There is no doubt, however, about the fact. Barklay, the author of the "Ship of Fools," who wrote the earliest English Eclogues, says in his prologue :—

" And in like manner, nowe lately in our dayes
Hath other poets attempted the same wayes
As the most famous Baptist Mantuan,
The best of that sort since poets first began ".

The poems of Mantuanus were publicly read in Paris early in the sixteenth century, while the Eclogues, established as a text-book in the schools of almost every country in Europe, were lauded and lectured upon *ad nauseam*. Farnaby's sarcastic reference was, indeed, the instinctive revolt of a genuine scholar and critic from the tasteless eulogies which had become a scholastic tradition. But Shakespeare's satire on the "bisson conspectuities" of the pedants is earlier and even more incisive. Those who are familiar with "Love's Labour's Lost" will remember that while the curate, Sir Nathaniel, is reading Biron's epistle, which "accidentally or by way of progression had miscarried," Holofernes, full of pedagogic self-importance, cannot resist airing at large his professional accomplishments. He accordingly breaks forth with a sounding line from the school author so dear to the pedantic mind :—

" *Fauste, precor, gelida quando pecus omne sub umbra Illuminat—*
and so forth. Ah, good old Mantuan ! I may speak of thee as the traveller doth of Venice :—

' — *Venegia, Venegia,
Chi non te vede, ei non te pregia* '.

Old Mantuan, old Mantuan! who understandeth thee not, loves thee not."

Both poet and critic were, however, as usual, comparatively powerless against the pedants; or rather, perhaps, it would be more correct to say that the *vis inertiae* of use and wont still kept the old Mantuan in his place as a favourite school author. As we have seen, he is enumerated in the year 1585 amongst the school-books to be used at St. Bees, and half a century earlier Mantuanus was prescribed amongst the authors to be read in the newly-established grammar school of St. Paul's. The Eclogues are also contained in each of the lists of forms and school-books given by Hoole. And in the body of his work Hoole not only states that Mantuanus was usually read in the grammar schools, but he selects the very lines quoted by Shakespeare to illustrate one of the ordinary school exercises known technically as metaphrase. The lines are as follows:—

"For Afternoon lessons on Mondayes and Wednesdayes let them make use of Mantuanus, which is a Poet, both for style and matter, very familiar and gratefull to children, and therefore read in most Schooles. They may read over some of the Eclogues that are less offensive than the rest, takeing six lines at a lesson, which they should first commit to memory, as they are able. Secondly, construe. Thirdly, parse. Then help them to pick out the phrases and sentences, which they may commit to a paper book; and afterwards resolve the matter of their lessons into an English period or two, which they may turn into proper and elegant Latine, observing the placing of words, according to prose. Thus out of the five first verses in the first Eclogue:—

'Fauste, precor, gelida quando pecus omne sub umbra
Ruminat, antiquos paulum recitemus amores,
Ne si forte sopor nos occupet ulla ferarum,
Quæ modo per segetes tacite insidiantur adultas,
Sæviat in pecudes, melior vigilantia somno,'

one may take such a period as this: Shepherds are wont sometimes to talke of their old loves, whilest the cattel chew the cud under the shade; for fear, if they should fall asleep, some Fox or Wolf, or such like beast of prey, which either lurk in the thick woods, or lay wait in the grown corn, should fall upon the cattel. And indeed, watching is farre more commendable for a Prince, or Magistrate, than immoderate, or unseasonable sleep. '*Pastores aliquando, dum pecus sub umbra ruminat, antiquos suos amores recitare solent; ne, si sopor ipsos occupet, vulpes, aut lupus, aut aliqua ejus generis fera prædabunda, quæ vel in densis sylvis latitant, vel per adultas segetes insidiatur, in pecude sæviat; imo enimvero Principi vel Magistratui vigilantia somno immodico ac intempestivo multo laudabilior est.*' And this will help to prepare their invention for future exercises, by teaching them to suck the marrow both of words and matter out of all their Authors."

Were there still any doubt on the subject, this passage is decisive as to the general use of the Eclogues in the grammar schools. It also shows that, notwithstanding the occasional protests of more cultured critics, they kept their place in the established curriculum down at least to the second half of the seventeenth century.

With regard to Shakespeare's further stages of progress in the upper school, the illustrations to be derived from his writings are perhaps neither so numerous nor decisive as those relating to the lower school. He refers, indeed, more than once to several of the authors read in the higher forms, and gives apt quotations from some of the more significant, such as Virgil and Horace, Terence and Seneca. But it is difficult, on the strength of such allusions and quotations, to estimate the progress made in these authors, as they would necessarily be read under the drawbacks insisted on by the reformers and without any of the helps they specify and recommend. It would seem, however, that Shake-

speare must have had some experience of the special exercises belonging to the higher forms, amongst others those of making Latin, of writing Latin epistles, themes, and verses. At least he represents Holofernes as criticising Biron's love sonnet according to the established stages and elements of progress in this department of school work. Two of the more important of these stages were technically known as imitation and invention, the lower exercise, or imitation, being preparatory to the higher and more independent effort required for invention. Imitation consisted in taking a passage from some author read in the class, and, while retaining the substance, altering the form. An example of this process has already been given in the passage just quoted from Hoole. Both Brinsley and Hoole carefully describe the exercise, and give directions for its efficient performance in prose and verse. Each takes, among other illustrations, an Epistle from Cicero, giving first the original and then the imitated form. To call out the higher energies of invention a subject was prescribed on which the more advanced pupils had to write a short Latin theme or a certain number of verses in an appointed metre. In doing this they were at full liberty to use the contents of their notes and commonplace books. Indeed, these books were kept and filled very much for the sake of these higher uses; the chief heads of invention or classified sources, whence reasons and illustrations to be used in the exercises might be derived, being entered in the blank book at the outset, and filled in from the reading and lectures of the class. The "invention" of the school exercises was in this way connected with the wider and more technical treatment of "invention"

or the finding of arguments in the old logics and rhetorics. The kind of exercise involved in invention tested the pupils' powers of thought as well as of expression, their promptness and flexibility of mind as well as their command of apt phrases, epithets, and turns of speech. Keeping these different elements of the upper-school exercises in view, we can better understand the exact force and bearing of the criticism Holofernes volunteers on Biron's love verses. The pedant, it will be remembered, after airing his knowledge of the Eclogues, and giving forth the Italian proverb about Venice, had been impatiently humming to himself while the curate read the letter just delivered by Jaquenetta. At length, his patience being exhausted, he addresses himself directly to the reader: "Under pardon, sir, what are the contents? or, rather, as Horace says in his ——?" Then, catching sight of the manuscript, he exclaims:—

"--What, my soul, verses?"

"*Nath.* Ay, sir, and very learned.

"*Hol.* Let me hear a staff, a stanza, a verse, *Lege, domine.*"

The curate having read the verses, the pedagogic habit is so inveterate with Holofernes that he cannot help coming the schoolmaster over even his mild-mannered and deferential companion. He complains that he has missed the necessary elisions, and not given the proper accent. "You find not the apostrophes, and so miss the accent: let me supervise the canzonet." Then taking the paper into his hands he proceeds, with a frown of critical concentration and the outstretching of a didactic forefinger towards the offending document, to deliver his authoritative judgment:—

"Here are only numbers ratified ; but, for the elegancy, facility, and golden cadence of poesy, *caret*. Ovidius Naso was the man : and why, indeed, Naso ; but for smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention ! *Imitari* is nothing : so doth the hound his master, the ape his keeper, the tired horse his rider."

We can fancy Master Thomas Hunt in the ancient Stratford school-house reading amongst the exercises of the higher forms one signed W. Shakespeare, but, unless he were exceptionally mole-eyed, hardly with the same result. The numbers might not indeed be perfectly ratified, as the boy's mastery over longs and shorts might be still defective. But the exercise, if marked by blemishes in the details of scholarship, could hardly be wholly wanting in facility, in flowers of fancy, and jerks of invention. However this may be, it seems clear from the extract that Shakespeare was familiar with the kind of exercise, as well as with the cut and dried scholastic principles according to which it was usually criticised.

In addition to Latin composition, another distinctive branch of study in the upper school was rhetoric. In all the accounts of the work done in this section, rhetoric plays an important part. In the higher forms of the Protestant schools, indeed, as well as in those of the Jesuits, the chief subjects of study were "*quod ad rhetoricam, poësim et historiam pertinet*". Thus Brinsley, in describing the work of the upper school, after dealing with the making of themes, verses, and orations, has a short chapter devoted to rhetoric, in which he says :—

"For answering the questions of Rhetoricke, you may, if you please, make them perfect in Talæus' Rhetoricke, which I take to

be most used in the best schooles; onely to give each definition and distribution, and some one example, or two at most, in each chapter; and those of the shortest sentences out of the poets: so that they can give the word or words, wherein the force of the rule is”.

In Hoole the elements of rhetoric are prescribed for the fourth, fifth, and sixth forms. In his account of the Rotherham classes he says of the fifth:—

“Their forenoons Lessons were in Butler’s Rhetorick, which they said memoriter, and then construed, and applied the example to the definition”;

and in the master’s method he says of the sixth:—

“Let them repeat parts as they did before out of the *Elementa Rhetoriciæ* every Thursday morning, and give account what grammatical or rhetorical notes they have collected and writ fair in their commonplace books for those arts”.

He gives similar directions for the special study of oratory and rhetoric in the fifth form. We may fairly assume that Shakespeare remained long enough at school to reach the fifth form, and “Love’s Labour’s Lost” supplies a curious piece of evidence tending to show that he had gone through a course of technical training in the elements of rhetoric. This valuable bit of evidence having been, I believe, hitherto overlooked by the critics and commentators, it may be worth while to give it in detail. It consists of a rare, and in many ways a remarkable, technicality occurring in the speech of Holofernes about the writer of the letter:—

“*Hol.* I will overglance the superscript: ‘To the snow-white hand of the most beauteous Lady Rosaline’. I will look again upon the *intellect* of the letter, for the nomination of the party writing to the person written unto: ‘Your Ladyship’s in all desired

employment, Biron'.—Sir Nathaniel, this Biron is one of the votaries with the king; and here he hath framed a letter to a sequent of the stranger queen's which accidentally, or by the way of progression, hath miscarried."

I had often been puzzled by the peculiar use of the term "intellect" in this passage, before I made the discovery that it was simply another stroke, helping to bring out still more vividly the character of the school pedant. In the unfamiliar use of this familiar term *Holofernes* is simply parading his knowledge of rhetorical technicalities. As a rhetorical exercise the boys of the upper school were required, in reading the poets, to pick out the figures of speech, enter them in a note-book, and give to each its technical name or names. In the classification of the figures common to the older manuals of rhetoric *synecdoche* usually follows *metaphor*, and the Latin equivalent of *synecdoche* is *intellectio*. Being given in the school manuals, this technical use of the term *intellectio* would be familiar to most who had received a training in the elements of rhetoric. But its precise meaning and range of application in this connection will be made clear by an extract from Wilson's English *Arte of Rhetorique*, published before Shakespeare was born. Wilson, following a tendency common in his day, endeavoured to Anglicise the technical terms of his art; and, where this could not conveniently be done, he often selected the better known Latin equivalent instead of the original Greek word. Thus he translates *synecdoche* by *intellection*, of which he gives the following account:—

"Intellection, called of the Grecians *synecdoche*, is a Trope, where we gather, or judge, the whole by the part, or part by the whole. As thus: The king is come to London, meaning thereby

that other also be come with him. The Frenche manne is good to kepe a fort, or to skirmishe on horsbacke, whereby we declare the Frenchmen generally. By the whole, the part, thus: All Cambridge sorrowed for the death of Bucer, meanyng for the moste parte. All England rejoiceth that pilgrimage is banished, and Idolatrie for ever abolished: and yet al England is not gladde but the moste parte."

Intellection, Wilson also points out, is used in relation to signs and their significance for the mental act of realising by means of the sign the thing signified. He illustrates this meaning as follows:—

"By the signe we understande the thing signified, as by an Ivie garland we judge there is wine to sell. By the signe of a Bear, Bull, Lion, or any soche, we take any hous to be an Inne. By eating bread at the Communion, we remember Christes death, and by fath receive him spirituellie."

The precise signification of intellect in Holofernes' speech will now be apparent. It really means the sign-manual or signature of the letter. The signature is the sign reflecting and revealing the thing signified, which is of course the writer of the letter. *Intellect*, in this sense, is the object, the sign, and its significance, of which *intellection* is the act, the perception of the related terms. As a name for the signature of a letter it is thus strictly analogous to *superscript*, as a name for its address. As superscription is properly the act of writing an address, and superscript the address written, so *intellection* is the act of interpreting or understanding a sign, and *intellect* the sign interpreted or understood. I may add that the use of the verb in this sense was not unknown in the literature of Shakespeare's day. The following extract from a rare and curious book, *The Fountaine of Ancient Fiction*, by Richard Linche

(1599), will illustrate Shakespeare's peculiar use of the noun :—

"Because the description of the Spring, the Summer, Autumn, and Winter are with everie one very familiar, I will cease to proceed therein, commemorating that onely of Ovid, when he speaketh of the regale seat of Phœbus :—

' Before divine Apolloes regall seat
The beauteous Spring sits crown'd with curious flowers,
Next whom (with eares of corne about her head)
The Summer sits in her all-parching heat,
And Autumne (dyde with juice of grapes) downepoures
A world of new-made wine of purest red,
Next whom (as placed all in due arow)
Sits grim-faced Winter covered all with snow'.

"These stations are many times thus *intellected* : by the Spring is meant Venus : the Summer signifies Ceres : Autumne challengeth Bacchus : and for the Winter we oftentimes understand Vulcan ; and sometimes the winds with Æolus the commander, because from these proceed those tempestuous storms which are commonly predominant in that season."

Here it will be seen that the verb *to intellect* is used in the strict technical sense of interpreting a sign, just as Shakespeare uses the noun for the sign interpreted. But although the word had this special meaning, none but a dominie bent on displaying his knowledge of scholastic technicalities would have designated the signature of a letter in this high-flown and pedantic style. The most strained and far-fetched terms are, however, quite natural in the mouth of Holofernes. But it may be safely asserted that only one trained in the elements of rhetoric could have added this characteristic touch in drawing the portrait of the school pedant. Other incidental illustrations of a technical knowledge of rhetoric occur in the scenes with Holofernes, especially in the smart dialogue with Moth about

the "figure," but the one I have dwelt upon is the most significant and important.

But although there is in this way some evidence to show that Shakespeare reached the higher forms of the school, and shared in their routine work, it is not likely that he made much progress in the more difficult authors read, or advanced beyond an average performance of its special exercises. It is difficult to imagine the future poet struggling persistently with the intricacies of verbal scholarship, or working with obstinate industry against the grain. His keenly sensitive nature and exuberant vitality would revolt from the minute and exhausting labour. But if any author read in the school course happened to touch his fancy, to excite his imagination, and respond to the varied moods of his quick poetic feeling, we may be sure that he would concentrate all the knowledge he had acquired on the voluntary perusal of such an author, and would continue his studies, in this direction at least, with ardour and delight. The question is: Do Shakespeare's writings contain any evidence in favour of such a supposition? I think they do; and as the evidence on this point has never been adequately detailed, I shall devote the remainder of this paper to its fuller exhibition.

More than a century ago Whalley remarked in his *Enquiry* that Ovid appeared to have been a favourite author with Shakespeare.¹ The remark has been not unfrequently repeated since, and probably most critical


¹ The association of Shakespeare's name with that of Ovid began, however, much earlier. Thus Meres, in 1598, says: "As the soule of Euphorbus was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the witty soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare, witness his 'Venus and Adonis,' his 'Lucrece,' his sugared 'Sonnets' among his private friends, etc.".

readers of the poet have arrived for themselves at a similar conclusion. Many must have felt, at least in a vague and general way, that Ovid is more frequently referred to than any other classic author, and that Shakespeare had derived more vivid pictures and apt illustrations from his writings than from those of any other Roman poet. Nor is this in the least surprising. The qualities that combine to render Ovid almost irresistibly attractive to poetical natures are not only numerous, but in their union, amongst Roman poets at least, rare if not unique. In the first place Ovid is the most modern of all the ancients. His love of nature and sympathy with human life, not only in its stately and heroic, but in its humblest forms, are essentially modern. His pictures of rural scenery and details of rustic life are elaborated with loving care, and, unlike Virgil in the "Georgics," he never paints an empty background with no moving object or incident to relieve and animate the scene. In his pictures there is always some stir of life, some elements of human experience familiar or heroic, passionate or pathetic. Again, the prominence which he gives to the passion of love, not only on its sensuous side in fervid elegiacs, but on its sentimental or romantic side, as it touches the imagination and the heart, anticipates one of the most characteristic features of modern literature. The same holds true of his intimate knowledge of female character, his insight into the subtle and powerful workings of the female heart. Ovid is unrivalled, amongst Roman poets, in his power of delineating the perplexing, but, in the strictest sense, fatal logic of female passion, its sudden moods and contradictory impulses, its wild vehemence or self-consuming reserve,

its pathetic tenderness, unsuspected strength, and absolute devotion. From his limitations of genius and temperament he cannot, indeed, touch the highest notes of female character, but he includes a much wider range than any of his Roman predecessors or contemporaries, and this is one of the points in which he becomes a vital link between ancient and modern art.

Ovid's defects no less than his excellences are curiously modern. Those most insisted on by hostile critics are the over-elaboration of details, the indulgence in discursive episodes, the accumulation of trivial conceits, strained metaphors, and far-fetched illustrations. In a word, he is charged with an unrestrained exuberance of fancy, feeling, and expression. But this very exuberance helps to make him the most picturesque and interesting, if not the most poetical, of Roman poets. Niebuhr's opinion, that, excepting Catullus, Ovid is the most poetical of the Romans, is well known, and there is a good deal to be said in its support. Of course, Ovid has not the severe beauty and concentrated epical art of Virgil. Even his best work wants the perfect unity and proportion, the dignity and grace, the mingled reserve and finish of the "Georgics" and the "Æneid". But in Virgil you feel everywhere the *limæ labor*. He works as a conscientious artist, impressed with the magnitude of his task, and ever striving with a noble perseverance after a lofty ideal, which he spares no pains to reach. And as a work of art the result is almost perfect, although you never lose the sense of effort, of cumulative and painful effort, involved in its production. Ovid, on the other hand, seems to sing from an irresistible impulse of nature. The moment

he strikes his lyre, the numbers appear not only to come, but to control in their melodious course the most intractable materials of his art, as the fabled harp of Orpheus did the stocks and stones of nature. There is a dash, sparkle, and spontaneity in his writing, which indicates the most genuine native inspiration, and the fullest enjoyment of the work. With his temperament and position, indeed, nothing but a love of poetry, amounting to a passion, could have induced him to devote his life to its production. He had a joyous pleasure-loving nature, which his circumstances and surroundings enabled him to gratify to the full. His rank and independent position introduced him to the society of the capital, while his social qualities, his genius and accomplishments, made him heartily welcomed by its highest circles. He was the child of his age, and thoroughly enjoyed the brilliant society, the multiplied luxuries and refinements, of Imperial Rome. But it is clear from the result that he had a still keener delight in his chosen work. He could sacrifice personal and social gratifications for the sake of giving form and substance to the visions inspired by his ardent poetical feeling. And his enthusiasm for the poetical art was supported by the rarest literary gifts. Foremost amongst these must be ranked his power of vivid conception. In his productive moods, the pictures that come within the eye and prospect of his soul seem as full of life "as though they lived indeed". The visions that fill his imagination have the colour, movement, and complex detail of the breathing world. Next to his vigorous and prolific fancy comes his unrivalled mastery over the vehicle of his art, musical and expressive diction. His facility of expression has been the subject of critical



eulogy from his own time to ours. His unfailing ease and grace of language, his exquisitely musical versification, indicate the union of consummate literary skill with inborn lyrical genius. Every thought, feeling, and image, as it arises, is perfectly reflected in the magical mirror of his harmonious verse. Language, music, and imagery seem as plastic to his touch as Nature herself in the hands of his transforming deities. This power of vivid conception, mastery of expressive speech, and command over descriptive detail give to his separate pictures a concrete reality and completeness that fascinate the mind, and produce almost irresistibly a momentary belief in the truth even of his wildest fictions. There is a grave and artless, or intense and passionate, circumstantiality about his narrative that carries conviction captive, and forces you to believe that what you so vividly see and feel must be the reflex of an actual experience. There can hardly, for example, be a wilder fiction than the story of Phaeton; but the narrative is so full of life and reality that after the glowing lines have once impressed it on the mind, it becomes almost impossible to think of the zodiac without a vision of the splendid chariot with its fiery steeds breaking impetuously away from the unsteady driver, and carrying ruin, conflagration, and eclipse down the western steep of heaven.

Stories and episodes almost equally impressive and memorable might be selected from each of the marvellous fifteen books. The best qualities of Ovid's muse are, indeed, concentrated in the "Metamorphoses," and they have conspired to make it one of the most attractive and entertaining books ever written. The actual popularity of the poem, too, has been

immense. Ovid is almost the one classical author whose light was never extinguished even in the darkest ages of ignorance and barbarism. By a curious fate the brilliant compendium of heathen mythology was often the only monument of antiquity to be found in monastic libraries, and it seems to have been thoroughly enjoyed by monkish scholars. At least it was often copied with zealous industry in the scriptorium, and moralised with pious ingenuity in the cell, when a profoundly serious and even religious author like Virgil was uncared for or unknown. In the middle ages the poem supplied a perfect storehouse of materials for the pictorial uses of the fine and decorative arts. Half the looms of Europe were busy working stories from Ovid into webs destined to brighten with life and colour the gloom of many a baronial and civic hall, as well as to protect and adorn many a noble lady's bower. After the revival of letters Ovid was read in all the schools and colleges of Christendom, and at the rise of vernacular literatures the "Metamorphoses" was amongst the earliest translations made from the classics into the mother-tongues of Europe. I need hardly refer to the high estimation in which Ovid was held by many of the greatest modern poets, and especially amongst ourselves by Chaucer, Spenser, and perhaps most of all by Milton. In his youth, at all events, Milton preferred Ovid to Virgil, and maintained that but for his exile the poet of the "Metamorphoses" might have been as great as Homer. The lines from the well-known Latin elegy, in which this opinion is expressed, may be quoted from Cowper's version :—

"If peaceful days, in letter'd leisure spent
Beneath my father's roof, be banishment,

Then call me banish'd, I will ne'er refuse
A name expressive of the lot I chuse.
I would that, exiled to the Pontic shore,
Rome's hapless bard had suffer'd nothing more ;
He then had equall'd even Homer's lays,
And, Virgil ! thou hadst won but second praise."

To the list of appreciative poets Shakespeare must certainly be added. The higher qualities of Ovid's genius and work were indeed precisely of the kind to attract and fascinate the youthful author of "Venus and Adonis". The life and colour, the passion and pathos, the endless variety of magical changes in the "Metamorphoses," with their exquisite verbal combinations and metrical harmonies, would have an irresistible charm for his opening fancy and ardent poetic feeling.

But there is still another quality of Ovid's genius which, perhaps, affected Shakespeare at the outset of his career more than all the rest. Ovid is, I venture to think, the most dramatic of Roman poets. This is, perhaps, a more disputable claim than any already made on his behalf. At least, it is one which many critics would be indisposed to allow. They often speak of his tender and passionate scenes as though they were rhetorical exercises rather than outbursts of genuine feeling ; but, although many artificial and rhetorical passages are to be found in Ovid's writings, the remarkable fact about the more important appears to me to be the wonderful freshness, variety, and even depth of real feeling they display. In the appreciation of his characteristics, Ovid has fared better at the hands of the poets than of the critics, and I cannot but think Dryden right, both as poet and critic, in the judgment he pronounces : "Though I see many excellent thoughts in

Seneca, yet he, of them [the Roman poets], who had a genius most proper for the stage, was Ovid; he had a way of writing so fit to stir up a pleasing admiration and concernment, which are the objects of tragedy, and to show the various movements of a soul combating betwixt two different passions, that, had he lived in our age, or in his own could have writ with our advantages, no man but must have yielded to him". It is true that we are deprived of the best and more direct means of estimating Ovid's dramatic faculty in the loss of his one great tragedy, the "Medea". But from the favourable judgment of not too friendly contemporary critics we may fairly conclude that it was a work of real and even remarkable dramatic power. In the most considerable of his extant works, the "Fasti" and "Metamorphoses," both the subject and form chosen are less fitted, and but for the result one might have said least fitted, for the display of Ovid's peculiar genius. Nothing at first sight would seem less suitable to become the subject of a serious epic than the national mythology, as it had already lost, or was fast losing, all real hold on the cultivated intelligence of the Roman world. In Ovid's day it had reached the stage of sceptical criticism, and was at many points exposed to popular ridicule and contempt. With regard to form, the natural bent of Ovid's mind was, as I have said, towards lyrical and dramatic poetry. In the earliest period of his career the poet himself had the clearest perception of this. At the beginning of the third book of his "Elegies" he says that, when meditating his future work, he was visited by the rival muses of the buskin and the lyre, and that the former upbraided him with wasting his poetic gifts on trivial love ditties instead of concentrating them on

the nobler task of depicting imperial woes in tragic verse. In reply to this appeal he pleads for a slightly extended indulgence of the lyric mood, intimating that when he had completed his "Elegies" he would betake himself to tragedy, for which, as he elsewhere tells us, he felt he had a special turn.

This early promise was not, however, redeemed. In after years, when he resolved to undertake more serious work, instead of devoting himself to the drama, he was led by the courtly and literary influences of his time to attempt an epic. The emperor, in his desire to restore the older and more robust conditions of national life, favoured this more solid form of the poetical art, and Virgil's recent success had given it a temporary supremacy. With Virgil, however, the choice of the epic form was perfectly natural. It was in thorough harmony with the seriousness of his disposition and aims. But Ovid had little of Virgil's profound and absorbing interest in the conditions and continuity of national greatness, in the past and future of Rome as the instrument and representative of law, order, and progress in the world. He had still less of that brooding and almost oppressive sense of the mystery and burden of life which solemnised Virgil's mind, and becomes audible at times in the touching minor key of his verse. He is separated from Virgil, too, by position, as well as by temperament. During the interval between them the Roman world had passed from the deep shadows and destructive violence of the Republican conflict to the sunlight and repose of the imperial day. Ovid lived in the sunlight and rejoiced in its warmth and brilliance till the sudden winter of his exile came. The ease and gaiety of this congenial urban life are well reflected in


his minor writings. But alike in the subject and form chosen for his greatest works, there can be little doubt that he had originally a serious purpose in view. Among his other reforms Augustus was anxious to restore the old reverence for the national deities, and Ovid was evidently desirous of giving the emperor's policy that kind of literary support of which the "*Æneid*" is the most brilliant example. He wished to do for the ritual and mythology what Virgil had done for the legendary history and antiquities of Rome. In other words, his aim was to revive popular interest in the deities and ceremonial of the national religion. He states at the beginning of the "*Fasti*" that this was his design in dealing poetically with the national calendar. And the "*Metamorphoses*" opens with the gravity and earnestness befitting a religious poem. But if he ever seriously thought himself capable of producing a sacred epic, he certainly formed an erroneous estimate of his literary aptitudes and poetical gifts. In any case his joyous temper and dramatic genius soon triumphed over the original design, and instead of bringing the gods down from heaven and exhibiting them as objects of awe and reverence to men, he simply carried his contemporaries to Olympus, and filled the august seats with lively representatives of the morals and manners of the Augustan age. This has sometimes been urged as a fatal objection to the poem. It is said that in its treatment of the national mythology, instead of maintaining their antique majesty, Ovid had not only modernised the gods, but represented them in the most literal, if not in the lowest, sense as being of like passions with ourselves. The reply of course is, that after warming to his work, the poet treated the subject naturally, under the inspiration and

according to the impulses of his own genius. He could not help vitalising the stories, and he filled them with the only life he knew, that of human passion and mundane activities. Instead of a sacred epic, we have accordingly a series of brilliant stories and vivid dramatic sketches, often pathetic enough in their tenderness and tragical in their intensity. Although not dramatic in form, most of his longer and most important works are, in this way, thoroughly dramatic in substance. This is true not only of the "Fasti" and "Metamorphoses," but of the "Heroic Epistles," in which Ovid's dramatic genius is often displayed with singular vividness and power. The objections sometimes urged against them on the ground of anachronisms and external incongruities, such as, in the case of Ariadne, the want of any means of communication with Theseus, the absence of writing materials, and possibly her ignorance of the art, are ludicrously wide of the mark. The real question is whether, realising in essentials the character and circumstances of the heroines, the poet expresses with vividness and truth the poignant internal conflict of grief and hope, of tumultuous passion, agonising dread, and tender desire. It will hardly be denied that this is strikingly true with regard to many of the Epistles, and especially the best. On this ground they might well be described in the phrase of a modern poet as "Dramatic Lyrics". But the "Metamorphoses" contains a number of powerful sketches that might appropriately come under the same heading. Dryden, with his usual critical sagacity and poetical insight, has noted this. Referring to a theory, since disproved, about the "Medea" of Seneca, that it might possibly be the lost tragedy of Ovid, he says :—

"I am confident the 'Medea' is none of his: for though I esteem it for the gravity and sententiousness of it, which he himself concludes to be suitable to a tragedy, 'Omne genus scripti gravitate tragoedia vincit,' yet it moves not my soul enough to judge that he, who in the epick way wrote things so near the drama, as the story of Myrrha, of Caunis, and Biblis, and the rest, should stir up no more concernment where he most endeavoured it".

But it is clear, I think, from internal evidence that Shakespeare had been struck with the dramatic power of many of the narratives of the "Metamorphoses" long before Dryden noted the fact. The stories of Phaeton, of Medea, of Pyramus and Thisbe, of Midas, of Progne and Philomela, of Baucis and Philemon, amongst others, had evidently impressed themselves on his youthful imagination in a way never to be forgotten. But these points and others connected with Shakespeare's acquaintance with Ovid will come more fully out in the special illustrations which are to follow.

Probably no critic would deny that Shakespeare was familiar with Ovid, but many maintain, as Farmer did, that his knowledge was derived solely from translations, and especially from Golding's translation of the "Metamorphoses". That Shakespeare well knew this vigorous and picturesque version is certain; but I feel equally confident, from what has already been said, that his study of Ovid in the original was begun at Stratford School, and had been voluntarily extended to his chief poems before he became acquainted with any translation. There are some points of evidence which tend directly to support this view. In the first place it is a striking fact that the keynote as it were of Shakespeare's public career as a poet should have been struck by a quotation from a section of Ovid's poems not yet



translated into English. So far as we know, Shakespeare himself published in his own name only three poems—the “Venus and Adonis,” the “Lucrece,” and the “Sonnets”. Of these, the “Venus and Adonis” was not only the first published, but apparently the earliest considerable poem the author had written. “The first heir of my invention,” he calls it in the dedication to the Earl of Southampton. The poem, though not published till 1593, must, in this case, have been written some years earlier, probably before Shakespeare left Stratford for London. On the title-page are the following lines from Ovid’s “Elegies” :—

“Vilia miretur vulgus : mihi flavus Apollo
Pocula Castalia plena ministret aqua”.


These lines are taken from a poem of which, as I have said, there existed at the time no English version. The earliest translation of the “Elegies” is that usually attributed to Marlowe, and published by his friends some years after his death. The exact date of the first edition cannot be decided with certainty, but Ritson fixes it in 1596, and Gifford, on apparently good grounds, a year or two later. The second edition, which probably followed within a year of the first, contains two versions of the “Elegy,” from which Shakespeare quotes—the second, signed B. J., being the work of Ben Jonson. This is established, not only by the initials, but by the fact that it is printed in full by Jonson as his own in the “Poetaster,” which appeared in 1601. Gifford is probably right in his conjecture that both versions are by Jonson, the first being a rough sketch of the second. In any case, the earlier version was not published till some years after the “Venus and Adonis”. But what, perhaps, is even more to the point, the quotation is one

which, from the circumstances of the case, could hardly have been chosen by any but a scholar, or at least by one who knew the original well. From their setting in the "Elegy," the lines would fail to attract special attention and be relatively unimportant in a translation. On the other hand, in the original poem, they have a distinctive emphasis and are full of concentrated meaning and power. The "Elegy" is a spirited vindication of poetry from the envious criticism of those who represented the poet as an idler, ignobly shirking the public duties which, as a reputable citizen, he ought to discharge. In reply, Ovid proudly asserts that the position of the true poet is higher than any to be gained by wealth or rank or public honours, that in his works he leaves an immortal heritage to men through which his nobler essence not only survives, but outlasts all the symbols and monuments of earthly greatness. In illustration of this, he commemorates some of the greatest poets of the past, including Homer, Hesiod, Sophocles, Menander, Ennius, Lucretius, Virgil, Tibullus, Gallus; and after going through the inspiring roll, he virtually says: "With these I take my part, their labours and rewards are the only objects of my ambition, their life the only life I care to live". It is a characteristic utterance on the part of Ovid, and expresses the fixed resolve of his nobler nature. But it is perhaps still more characteristic in the mouth of Shakespeare, when, conscious of great powers, and resolved to find, or create, an ample field for their exercise, he set out on his life's journey, with no help from fortune or friends, and no ultimate hope or desire beyond the poet's crown. In these lines he avows himself the child of Apollo, and declares that henceforth

his *elixir vitæ* will be full draughts from the Castalian spring. The same proud note of confidence in himself and devotion to his art reappears again and again in the "Sonnets," and here too, as we shall see, he echoes the confident predictions of the future fame in which Ovid indulges at the close of his greatest work. But the earlier quotation shows that Shakespeare had extended his studies in Ovid, not only beyond the books usually read in the schools, the "*De Tristibus*" and the "*Metamorphoses*," but beyond the utmost limits where the help of a translation was available.

I may next take another point of evidence, which, though comparatively small and indirect, appears to tell with some force in the same direction. It is well known that Shakespeare derived several of the names occurring in his dramas, such as Autolycus, directly from Ovid. Some of these have curious points of interest connected with them. But there is one, about which little has been said, that is perhaps more remarkable and interesting than any besides—the name of the fairy queen, Titania. Of this name so accomplished a student of Shakespeare as Mr. Ward says, singularly enough: "The figure of the elf-queen Shakspeare might have found in the 'Wife of Bath's Tale' in Chaucer. Her name Titania was, so far as we know, Shakspeare's invention, and may have been suggested by Diana, who, as King James I. informs us, 'amongst us was called the Phairee,' though Simrock (ii. 34) derives the same from Titti (children), the stealing of whom is a favourite pursuit of the elfin spirits." Both the German critic and the English historian had apparently forgotten that the name is traceable to Ovid, and that as used by him it has a very distinctive

significance. So far as I know, however, Mr. Keightley is the only critic who has connected the name with Ovid; and he does so very generally, without bringing out in any detail the meaning and value of the fact. His statement is that Titania occurs once in the "Metamorphoses" as a designation of Diana. But in reality the name occurs not once only, but several times, not as the designation of a single goddess, but of several female deities, supreme or subordinate, descended from the Titans. On this ground it is applied to Diana, to Latona, to Circe, to Pyrrha, and Hecate. As Juno is called by the poets *Saturnia*, on account of her descent from Saturn, and Minerva, on less obvious or more disputed grounds, is termed *Tritonia*, so Diana, Latona, and Circe are each styled by Ovid *Titania*. This designation illustrates, indeed, Ovid's marked power of so employing names as to increase both the musical flow and imaginative effect of his verse. The name Titania, as thus used, embodies rich and complex associations connected with the silver bow, the magic cup, and the triple crown. It may be said, indeed, to embrace in one comprehensive symbol the whole female empire of mystery and night belonging to classical mythology. Diana, Latona, Hecate are all goddesses of night, queens of the shadowy world, ruling over its mystic elements and spectral powers. The common name thus awakens recollections of gleaming huntresses in dim and dewy woods, of dark rites and potent incantations under moonlit skies, of strange aerial voyages, and ghostly apparitions from the under-world. It was, therefore, of all possible names the one best fitted to designate the queen of the same shadowy empire, with its phantom troops and activities, in the northern my-



thology. And since Shakespeare, with prescient inspiration, selected it for this purpose, it has naturally come to represent the whole world of fair beauty, elfin adventure, and goblin sport connected with lunar influences, with enchanted herbs, and muttered spells. The Titania of Shakespeare's fairy mythology may thus be regarded as the successor of Diana and other regents of the night belonging to the Greek Pantheon. Shakespeare himself appears to support this view in a line over which a good deal of critical ink has been shed. It occurs in the invocation to the fairies in the "Merry Wives of Windsor":—

"Fairies, black, grey, green, and white,
You moonshine revellers, and shades of night,
You orphan heirs of fixed destiny,
Attend your office, and your quality".

The deities of the Greek mythology were instruments of destiny or fate, in other words, of the ultimate powers of the universe. In the current belief of the middle ages, still firmly held in Shakespeare's day, the beings of the northern mythology were the representatives and successors of the old Greek divinities. Shakespeare indirectly favours this relation not only by the selection of the name Titania for the fairy queen, but in giving to Oberon the designation consecrated by Ovid to Pluto. "Umbrarum dominus," "umbrarum rex," are Ovid's phrases for the monarch of the lower world, and Oberon is by Shakespeare styled "King of Shadows". But the great Pan was long since dead, and with him the Titanic brood and Olympian circle of pagan deities. In this point of view, as offshoots of the Greek mythology, and in relation to their traditional parents and predecessors, the fairies might well be

called orphan, while, as still representing the dark powers and primary forces known as Fate, they might be appropriately styled "heirs of fixed destiny". Ariel, in the "Tempest," it will be remembered, says explicitly: "I and my fellows are ministers of Fate".

Reverting to the name Titania, however, the important point to be noted is that Shakespeare clearly derived it from his study of Ovid in the original. It must have struck him in reading the text of the "Metamorphoses," as it is not to be found in the only translation which existed in his day. Golding, instead of transferring the term Titania, always translates it, in the case of Diana, by the phrase "Titan's daughter," and in the case of Circe by the line—

"Of Circe, who by long descent of Titans' stocke am borne".

Shakespeare could not therefore have been indebted to Golding for the happy selection. On the other hand, in the next translation of the "Metamorphoses" by Sandys, first published ten years after Shakespeare's death, Titania is freely used. Sandys not only uniformly transfers the name where it occurs in the original, but sometimes employs it where Ovid does not. In Medea's grand invocations to the powers of night, for example, he translates "Luna" by "Titania". But this use of the name is undoubtedly due to Shakespeare's original choice, and to the fact that through its employment in the "Midsummer Night's Dream" it had become a familiar English word. Dekker, indeed, had used it in Shakespeare's lifetime as an established designation for the queen of the fairies. It is clear, therefore, I think, that Shakespeare not only studied the "Metamorphoses" in the original, but that he read the different

stories with a quick and open eye for any name, incident, or allusion that might be available for use in his own dramatic labours. The names, incidents, and allusions which he derived from his study of Ovid being, however, numerous, will require some space, and their detailed illustration must therefore be left over for a separate paper.

III.

IN tracing more in detail the proofs of Shakespeare's familiarity with Ovid, his general literary method must be kept in view. While there is the clearest evidence that his mind was richly stored with knowledge of all kinds, he is far too great an artist to make any section of it prominent in his writings. This applies with special force to the kind of knowledge which academic poets and scholarly wits are apt to display—the knowledge of books. Many of the writers for the stage, who were Shakespeare's immediate predecessors or early contemporaries, had spent some years at the universities, and their dramas not only abound with literary references and allusions, but contain at intervals long quotations from foreign sources, and especially from the Roman poets and prose writers. The unspent force of the powerful Renaissance wave swayed secondary and imitative minds in the same direction. And at the outset of his career, Shakespeare was so far affected by the prevailing tendencies that his early plays have, as a rule, more numerous learned allusions than the later. This is not, however, as is sometimes assumed, an invariable mark or test of early work. The "Comedy of Errors," though constructed on the

well-known lines of Plautus and Terence, contains, perhaps for this very reason, far fewer classical allusions than many, indeed than most, of the later plays. But in "Titus Andronicus," "Love's Labour's Lost," the "Taming of the Shrew," and the parts of "Henry VI.," the bookish element, though much less than in many contemporary plays, is still a distinctive feature. Even in these earliest efforts, however, Shakespeare yields only a passing and temporary homage to the custom of copious allusion and quotation so common in his day. His intellectual power was too exuberant, his creative imagination too fertile, his dramatic feeling too vivid and intense, to allow of scholastic display, or merely external decoration of any kind. Classical and learned allusions, if employed at all, are usually wrought by the dominant feeling into the very substance of the work. But, as I have said, in his more mature and characteristic writings such allusions are rare. It is the more significant, therefore, that direct references to Ovid, and quotations from his poems, are comparatively numerous, although, as might be expected, they occur for the most part in early plays. Apart from direct evidence, indeed, it might be safely assumed that the influence of Ovid over Shakespeare would be stronger in the earlier stages of his career, before his own dramatic style was fully formed, than in the later, when his powers were developed, and he had acquired complete command over the conditions and resources of his art.

In dealing with the direct references to Ovid, "Titus Andronicus" may be taken first in order of time. At least, I may say in passing that, after a careful examination of the question, I feel convinced that the

play is Shakespeare's, and if so, it is obvious it must be early work, his very first tragedy, if not his first drama. The marks of youthful effort are everywhere apparent, not only in the acceptance of the coarse type of tragedy that occupied the London stage when Shakespeare first became acquainted with it, but in the crude handling of character and motive, and the want of harmony in working out the details of the conception. All through, the ardent love of beauty and keen delight in nature struggle with the physical horrors and moral gloom of the tragedy. In relation to the point in hand, the immaturity is seen in the extent to which the smell of the lamp mingles with the freshness and vigour of poetic feeling. The wide circle of references to Greek fable and Roman story suggests that the writer had come recently from his books, and was not unwilling to display his acquaintance with them. Some of the books and authors from whose pages incidents and allusions have been derived are, as in the case of Ovid, mentioned by name.

The earliest direct reference to Ovid occurs in the first scene of the fourth act, where, in the garden of Titus's house, the terribly mutilated Lavinia is seen eagerly turning over the books her nephew Lucius had let fall on her hasty approach. Titus and Marcus, to whom the boy had appealed, after watching her for a time, observe that she had fixed on one of the books, and is rapidly turning over the leaves as though in search of some reference or passage that might tell what she cannot utter:—

“Tit. Lucius, what book is that she tosseth so ?

“Young Luc. Grandsire, 'tis Ovid's ‘Metamorphoses’ ;

My mother gave it me.

"*Marc.* For love of her that's gone,
 Perhaps she cull'd it from among the rest.
 "*Tit.* Soft! see how busily she turns the leaves! [*Helping her.*
 What would she find?—Lavinia, shall I read?
 This is the tragic tale of Philomel,
 And treats of Tereus's treason. . . ."

The tale of Tereus having hinted at her woe, the plan devised by her uncle for revealing the names of the murderous ruffians who had so cruelly wronged her—that of writing in the sand with the staff—seems also to have been suggested by Ovid. At least, it naturally recalls the vivid dramatic sketch in which he describes the lingered-out parting on the shore between Calypso and Ulysses. Urged to tell once more the tale of Troy, the wide-wandering hero draws with his stick on the sand a map of the city, with the friendly and hostile encampments around it.

"*Ille levi virga (virgam nam forte tenebat),
 Quod rogat, in spisso litore pingit opus,
 Hæc, inquit, Troja est (muros in litore fecit):
 Hic tibi sit Simois: hæc mea castra puta.
 Campus erat (campumque facit) quem cæde Dolonis
 Sparsimus, Hæmonios dum vigil optat equos.*"

The third scene of the same act contains a quotation from Ovid, a hemistich from the fine passage in the first book of the "*Metamorphoses*," in which he describes the flight of Justice from the polluted earth. The venerable Titus, in his ecstasy of grief and loss, despairing of justice on the earth, commands those about him to scour the seas and search the underworld to find her:—

"*Terras Astræa reliquit:*
 Be you remember'd, Marcus, she's gone, she's fled.
 Sirs, take you to your tools. You, cousins, shall

Go sound the ocean, and cast your nets
 Happily you may catch her in the sea ;
 Yet there's as little justice as at land."

The numerous indirect allusions to Ovid's writings in the play will be noticed further on. But before leaving it here another line from the scene already referred to may perhaps be fairly interpreted as a direct allusion to the favourite author. When Lucius runs to his grandfather perplexed and alarmed at his aunt's hurried approach and excited manner, Titus replies :—

"Fear her not, Lucius ;—somewhat doth she mean ;—
 See, Lucius, see how much she makes of thee :
 Somewhither would she have thee go with her.
 Ah, boy, Cornelia never with more care
 Read to her sons than she hath read to thee
Sweet poetry and Tully's Orator."

Now, as the "Metamorphoses" had been given to the boy by his mother, and his Aunt Lavinia shows immediately after her intimate knowledge of the book, it seems reasonable to conclude that Ovid's delightful stories were the sweet poetry she had read to the boy. In support of this it will be remembered that in the grammar schools of Shakespeare's youth the pupils usually read Ovid and Cicero for a year or two before they advanced to Horace and Juvenal, and that the epithet "sweet" is not only peculiarly suitable, but specially applied to Ovid in the literature of the time. From his smooth versification, felicitous turns of speech, and fulness of tender sentiment, he was appropriately designated by an epithet that would hardly apply to the poets read in the more advanced stages of the school course. We may therefore, I think, fairly interpret the line, "Sweet poetry and Tully's Orator," as referring to the school association of Ovid and Cicero.

The next play in which Shakespeare refers to Ovid by name is "Love's Labour's Lost". The pedantic Holofernes, though destitute of true taste or cultured judgment, knows well enough the technical merits of the chief school authors. In criticising Biron's verses he takes the opportunity of displaying his familiarity with Ovid, and although, under the impulse of the "foolish extravagant spirit" that possesses him, he cannot help playing with the name, the substance of his general statement is not very wide of the mark: "Here are only numbers ratified: but, for the elegancy, facility, and golden cadence of poesy, *caret*. Ovidius Naso was the man: and why, indeed, Naso, but for smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention?" Here the main characteristics of Ovid's muse, his ease, elegance, fertility of invention and musical sweetness, are clearly indicated, though in a characteristically fantastic way.

The "Taming of the Shrew" is another early play, comparatively rich in direct references to Ovid. Indeed, though not amongst the very earliest of Shakespeare's works, it abounds with classical allusions in common with the older drama on which it is founded. The references to Ovid are, however, from Shakespeare's own pen, as they do not appear in the "Pleasant conceited Historie called the 'Taming of the Shrew'". The earliest reference is in the first scene of the first act, in the dialogue between Lucentio and Tranio on their arrival at Padua, "the nursery of arts," in order to enter on a "course of learning and ingenious studies". After having been brought up at Florence, Lucentio, the son of a wealthy merchant, returns to Padua, the place of his birth, to complete his education by the study of

philosophy. This determination he explains in his opening speech :—

“ And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study
Virtue, and that part of philosophy
Will I apply, that treats of happiness
By virtue especially to be achiev'd.
“ *Tra. Mi perdonate*, gentle master mine,
I am in all affected as yourself ;

Only, good master, while we do admire
This virtue and this moral discipline,
Let's be no stoics, nor no stocks, I pray ;
Or so devote to Aristotle's checks,
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjur'd.”

This line not improbably reflects a personal experience. It suggests that Shakespeare had found Ovid's refreshing tales a welcome relief from his professional labours, a stimulating relaxation for leisure hours. The next reference to Ovid in the “Taming of the Shrew” shows that Lucentio had not only taken Tranio's advice, but promptly turned it to practical account. Having fallen in love with Bianca, the beautiful and gentle sister of the shrewish Kate, Lucentio gains access to her in the disguise of a tutor, and pleads his passion under the mask of a lesson in Latin construing, Ovid being the instrument employed in this lover's stratagem :—

“ *Bian.* Where left we last ?

“ *Luc.* Here, madam :—

*‘ Hac ibat Simois ; hic est Sigeia tellus ;
Hic steterat Priami regis celsa senis ’.*


“ *Bian.* Construe them.

“ *Luc.* *Hac ibat*, as I told you before, *Simois*, I am Lucentio, *hic est*, son unto Vincentio of Pisa, *Sigeia tellus*, disguised thus to get your love ; *Hic steterat*, and that Lucentio that comes a-wooing, *Priami*, is my man Triano, *regis*, bearing my port, *celsa senis*, that we might beguile the old pantaloon.”

These lines are from the first of the "Heroic Epistles," that from Penelope to Ulysses. After recalling how often her loving heart had been wrung with anxiety during his absence at the Trojan war, Penelope reminds her wandering lord that the war was now happily over; that the Argive heroes had returned, and were offering in the local temples thanksgivings for their success; that many long-betrothed maidens were at length married; and that, at their festive gatherings, the warrior bridegrooms, in fighting their battles over again, often sketched with a little wine on the table an outline of the city walls and of the chief positions connected with the conflict. They were thus doing at home for their wedding guests what Ulysses himself was doing for Calypso on the shores of her wonderful island. The graphic touch in either case illustrates the devices which Ovid's dramatic instinct prompted him to adopt, in order to give vividness and interest to his narrative. This particular device seems indeed to have struck Shakespeare's fancy, as he not unfrequently employs it for descriptive effect in his own work. The following from "Lucrece" is one amongst other instances of its use that might be given:—

"While with a joyless smile she turns away
The face, the map which deep impression bears
Of hard misfortune, carv'd in it with tears".

Another quotation from the "Heroic Epistles" occurs in the last part of "Henry VI." among the closing lines of the third scene of the first act. It is a line put into the mouth of the ill-fated prince, the Earl of Rutland, a mere boy and utterly defenceless, at the moment when he is cruelly stabbed to the heart by Clifford, "the deadly bloodsupper," as he is appropriately



termed in the prose chronicles of the time. After pleading for his life in vain, Rutland with his last breath prays that he alone may suffer at Clifford's hands, that his ruthless lust of blood and vengeance may find no other victims:—

"*Rut.* O, let me pray before I take my death !

To thee I pray : sweet Clifford, pity me !

"*Clif.* Such pity as my rapier's point affords.

"*Rut.* I never did thee harm : why wilt thou slay me ?

"*Clif.* Thy father hath.

"*Rut.* But 'twas ere I was born.

Thou hast one son, for his sake pity me ;

Lest in revenge thereof,—sith God is just,—

He be as miserably slain as I.

Ah, let me live in prison all my days ;

And when I give occasion of offence,

Then let me die, for now thou hast no cause.

"*Clif.* No cause !

Thy father slew my father ; therefore, die.

[*Stabs him.*

"*Rut.* *Dii fuciant, laudis summa sit ista tue !*

[*Dies.*

"*Clif.* Plantagenet ! I come, Plantagenet !

And this thy son's blood, cleaving to my blade,

Shall rust upon my weapon, till thy blood,

Congea'd with this, do make me wipe off both." [Exit.

It is worth noting that this line from Ovid was added by Shakespeare himself to a scene in which his alterations of the original are few and slight. In the "True Tragedie of Richard Duke of Yorke," Rutland's longer speech appealing for pity is his last, and the six lines of Clifford's undivided reply close the scene. The line is thus given to Rutland by Shakespeare, and there is perhaps a certain propriety in this, as the poor boy had appeared on the field not as a combatant but as a spectator ; and when intercepted by Clifford, was hastening to a place of safety with his tutor, a priest named Sir

Robert Aspoll. The line is taken from the second of the "Heroic Epistles," that from Phyllis to Demophoon, and as Shakespeare was probably working at the "Taming of the Shrew" and the parts of "Henry VI." about the same time, the two quotations from the first and second of the "Heroic Epistles" would seem to show that he had recently been studying these celebrated dramatic lyrics.

The last direct reference to Ovid occurs in "As You Like It," and it is in many respects the most curious of all. The reference is not only a minutely learned one, but it comes from the lips of a stage clown or professional fool, the humorous jester Touchstone, and it is addressed to the simple-souled Audrey, whose dense rustical ignorance barely comprehends the ordinary dialect even of border men. The third scene of the third act opens as follows :—

"*Touch.* Come apace, good Audrey : I will fetch up your goats, Audrey. And how, Audrey ? am I the man yet ? doth my simple feature content you ?

"*Aud.* Your features ! Lord warrant us ! what features ?

"*Touch.* I am here, with thee and thy goats, as *the most capricious poet, honest Ovid, was among the Goths.*"

Well may the melancholy Jaques, on overhearing this speech, exclaim : "O knowledge ill-inhabited, worse than Jove in a thatched house !" Touchstone himself seems to feel that his knowledge is equally ill-bestowed.

"*Touch.* When a man's verses cannot be understood, nor a man's good wit seconded with the forward child, Understanding, it strikes a man more dead than a great reckoning in a little room. Truly, I would the gods had made thee poetical.

"*Aud.* I do not know what "poetical" is: is it honest in deed and word? is it a true thing?"

"*Touch.* No, truly; for the truest poetry is the most feigning; and lovers are given to poetry; and what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers they do feign."

In explanation of Touchstone's "good wit," as exemplified in his learned comparison, it must be remembered that he was a courtly jester who could rail at Lady Fortune in good set terms, and hold his own in wit combats with his social superiors, whose brain had strange places crammed with odds and ends of bookish knowledge, as well as with observation, "the which he vents in mangled forms". But that such a reference should with any semblance of dramatic propriety be put into the mouth, even of a duke's jester, illustrates the familiarity with Ovid and his writings which must have prevailed in urban and courtly circles. The epithet "capricious" in Touchstone's speech is a good example of the subtle playing with words, the skilful suggestion of double meanings, of which Shakespeare in common with Ovid is so fond.

In passing to the indirect proofs of Shakespeare's acquaintance with Ovid I will take first the minor poems, leaving the points of evidence scattered through the dramas to be collected into groups rather than dealt with in the order of the actual occurrence in the several plays. Though now little read, these minor poems, and especially the "Venus and Adonis" and the "Lucrece," were once famous, and in the early part of his career probably did more even than his dramas to make Shakespeare well and widely known. At that time indeed plays, being produced for the stage, not for the press, and usually published only through the actors'

mouths, were hardly ranked as literature at all. For what is simply spoken "cannot outrun the range of the speaker's voice, and perishes in the uttering". In the same way, though usually written in verse, plays were not, as a rule, classified as poetry, this title being reserved for the various forms of the lyric, songs and ballads, for elegies and sonnets, for epics and allegories, for pastoral, descriptive and historical pieces. And writers for the stage who also aspired to the character of poets usually attempted one of these more permanent and recognised varieties. Shakespeare himself is no exception. On becoming firmly established in his new career as playwright and dramatic proprietor, he seems to have felt that, like others around him, he could now select a patron, and indulge in the luxury of more orthodox or literary verse. He accordingly recalled and prepared for the press his early poetical studies, "Venus and Adonis," the first heir of his invention, and the companion picture of "Lucrece," which followed immediately after. They are wonderful poems to have been produced by an English youth writing in the country between the years 1580 and 1586-7. The "Lucrece" was indeed written somewhat later than the "Venus and Adonis," but they are so connected in subject and treatment, so obviously early studies having common characteristics, that for the purpose in hand they may be considered together. The marvel is that poems so unlike anything in contemporary literature, yet with so marked an individuality of form, colouring and poetical treatment, should have been produced by a "prentice hand" in a small provincial town. So far as the finer essence, the vital substance of his work, is concerned, the poet is, we know, born not made, and

Shakespeare is the supreme example of this truth. But like every other artist the poet must study the elements of his craft, must learn to master the materials he has to use so as to handle them with freedom and power in attempting new combinations. In the fundamental points of poetic form and treatment, this can only be effected by the careful study of the best available models. What models, it may be asked, were there for classical poems of this peculiar type at the time when Shakespeare was engaged in embodying his earlier poetical conceptions? In reply to this question, Mr. Collier says of "Venus and Adonis": "It was quite new in its class, being founded upon no model, either ancient or modern; nothing like it had been attempted before, and nothing comparable to it was produced afterwards". On the other hand, Mr. Minto suggests that the tale of "Glaucus and Sylla," by Lodge, is the probable model of Shakespeare's earlier poem, and, but for the chronological difficulty, I should certainly be disposed to attach great weight to this suggestion. All the facts and probabilities of the case seem however to indicate that the "Venus and Adonis," as Shakespeare's earliest considerable effort, must have been produced at Stratford some years before the appearance of Lodge's poem. With regard to the internal evidence in support of this view, Mr. Collier says: "A young man so gifted would not, and could not, wait until he was five or six and twenty before he made considerable and most successful attempts at poetical composition; and we feel morally certain that 'Venus and Adonis' was in being anterior to Shakespeare's quitting Stratford. It bears all the marks of youthful vigour, of strong passion, of luxuriant imagination, together with a force and

originality of expression which betoken the first efforts of a great mind, not always well regulated in its taste. It seems to have been written in the open air of a fine country like Warwickshire, possessing all the freshness of the recent impression of natural objects ; and we will go so far as to say that we do not think even Shakespeare himself could have produced it, in the form it bears, after he had reached the age of forty." In relation to the last point I should be disposed to go further still, and say that it is very unlikely that Shakespeare either could or would have produced such a poem after he had found in the drama the free use of both his hands—the means of dealing effectively with action as well as passion. We must, therefore, look for Shakespeare's early models as to style and treatment amongst his youthful studies at Stratford, and especially amongst the poets read during his school course.

Adopting this view, many critics have traced in Shakespeare's two descriptive poems the influence of Ovid and Virgil respectively, of which from natural affinity that of Ovid would be the stronger. Virgil, for tolerably obvious reasons, seems to have had but little influence. He lacks the unstudied descriptive charm, the elegiac sweetness, the emotional and picturesque variety, as well as the vivid dramatic touches which in his early days so powerfully attracted Shakespeare towards Ovid. Apart from a few striking episodes and the unfailing literary beauty and finish of the work, it may be questioned, indeed, whether the "Georgics" or even the "Æneid" would appeal with any special power to Shakespeare's more intimate sympathies. Alike in motive, substance, and treatment, these poems are somewhat alien to the natural movement of Shake-

speare's mind. Virgil's absorption of feeling in a limited, though impressive range of objects and associations, has little in common with Shakespeare's vivid and intense interest in all the varieties of individual character, and all the vicissitudes of actual life. The glorification of a person or an institution, a city or even an empire, would have been a comparatively narrow theme to one whose attention was already fixed on the boundless moral interests and infinite vital complexities belonging to the wide circle of human experience. And the didactic and rhetorical expedients required for the elaboration of the narrower theme are foreign to the firm and flexible, yet delicate and subtle, handling of character and motive belonging to the larger world. The genius of the two poets is thus essentially different, the one illustrating the combination of qualities which go to the making of a great epic and didactic, the other those of a peerless elegiac and dramatic artist.

Virgil is indeed far nearer to Milton than to Shakespeare. Like Milton, he could brood over a great subject which touched his intellect and imagination through his affections, could slowly accumulate materials for its illustration, mould them into form with all the skill of a tuneful, artistic and richly cultivated nature, and give the work a massive unity of feeling and purpose. On the other hand, Shakespeare's imagination was from the first stimulated and swayed by purely poetical rather than by personal influences, by the beauty, interest, and vital unity of the object contemplated, rather than by a ruling individual sentiment determining alike the choice of subject and method of treatment. His poetical genius is thus more of the Greek than of the Roman type, and in its earlier exercises he would naturally be drawn

towards those of the Roman poets who in their central characteristics come nearest to the Greeks. It need hardly be said that the Greek imagination had a strongly objective bent, a pervading love of form which gives firmness of outline, harmony of proportion, and unity of structure and effect to their poetry as well as to their decorative and plastic art. The severer taste of the more eminent Greek artists would, it is true, have hardly tolerated the luxuriance of imagination, variety of elements, and laxity of structure found at times in the work of their representatives both in Roman and English literature. But they agree in the central characteristic of dealing directly with the object, and so grouping the accessories as to present the picture as a whole to the mental view.

Now there are two, and only two, Latin poets who display in a marked degree the objective imagination of their Ionic predecessors. Catullus and Ovid have the distinctive Greek power of vividly conceiving an impressive or pathetic scene and presenting it pictorially to the reader's mind in its concrete fulness as a living whole. It is in relation to this power that Niebuhr speaks of Catullus and Ovid as the most poetical of the Roman poets. And Professor Sellar in his admirable study of Virgil, while differing widely from the German historian in many points of criticism, agrees with him in recognising the peculiar type of genius belonging to the earliest and latest elegiac poets of the great period of Roman literature. Referring to Ovid and Catullus, he says that they above all other Latin poets "can bring a picture from human life or from outward nature before the inward eye, and this power is much more than Virgil's power of suggesting deep and delicate

shades of inward feeling appropriated to the more limited compass of the idyl". And of Catullus in particular he says, "he had in his genius more than any Roman writer the disinterested delight in art irrespective of any personal associations characteristic of the Greek imagination". The supreme example of this power in Roman literature is of course the *Epithalamium* of Peleus and Thetis. But the *Attys* perhaps even more strikingly illustrates the distinctively Greek power of developing with dramatic intensity and truth some passion foreign to the writer's own experience.

Ovid, however, no less than Catullus, is endowed with a creative pictorial imagination. Some of his finished studies, and several of his separate sketches, approach the masterpieces of Catullus in descriptive vividness and pathetic interest, if not in passionate intensity and concentrated imaginative power. In splendour of glowing imagery the story of Phaeton is unrivalled, while the tragical tales of Pyramus and Thisbe, of Ceyx and Halcyone, the touching pictures of Baucis and Philemon, of Ceres in the house of Celeus and Metanira, are equally noteworthy for truth of natural colouring, delicacy of finish, and picturesque effect.

Shakespeare was pre-eminently endowed with this power of bodying pictorially forth the form of things unknown, and the supreme examples of its exercise are found in his earliest published poems. They are the most brilliant verbal pictures in the language. We have no evidence to show whether Shakespeare was well acquainted with Catullus or not. But we know that he was a diligent student of Ovid. And as his earliest work has so much in common with the distinc-

tive features of the "Metamorphoses," it may be safely inferred that he was largely influenced by Ovid's method of dealing with mythological fable and heroic story. The full sensuous pictorial treatment of his theme in the "Venus and Adonis" and the "Lucrece" is thoroughly Ovidian. Indeed, the parallel with Ovid might be traced through most of the points which Coleridge, in his criticism of these poems, has signalised as strong proofs of original poetic genius. There is the same sweetness of versification, the evident enjoyment of melodious sounds, the sense of musical delight and the power of producing it which is so distinctively a gift of nature. There is the same choice of subjects remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer, the same latent dramatic instinct working by a series of vivid images, which gives the highest effect of the picturesque in words, and constitutes a kind of substitute for the visual language of the stage. And, finally, there is the same modification of the thoughts, images and incidents by the pervading influence of a dominant passion or sentiment helping to connect the details and give unity of effect to the picture.

Not only his early studies, but the Renaissance enthusiasm, which reached its highest point in England during the latter half of the sixteenth century, would naturally lead Shakespeare to select classical subjects for his first efforts. And in Ovid he would find a perfect storehouse of such subjects treated in a manner congenial to his vivid fancy and ardent feeling. To that storehouse he accordingly betook himself. At least it is, I think, clear from internal evidence that the germ of both the descriptive poems was derived from Ovid,

that of "Venus and Adonis" from the brief account of the same story at the end of the tenth book of the "Metamorphoses," and that of "Lucrece" from the vivid dramatic sketch of the tragedy which closes the second book of the "Fasti". In each case the exuberant growth into which the original seed rapidly expanded sufficiently shows the extraordinary richness and fertility of the soil. For brilliancy of imaginative detail, depth of colouring, and exquisite pictorial finish, the "Venus and Adonis" surpasses every descriptive poem of antiquity, except perhaps the Proserpine of Claudian. And even here the vernal freshness and vigorous beauty of Shakespeare's picture are in striking contrast to the borrowed tints and mellowed autumnal tone of Claudian's canvas, while the light that falls upon the pictures respectively is that of the opening dawn and the fading sunset glow. In other words, the revival of classical subjects in the sixteenth century, the new birth of what was beautiful, heroic, and picturesque in pagan art, had characteristics of its own which reveal the important intellectual and moral changes the intervening period had produced.

Shakespeare's obligations to Ovid in the "Venus and Adonis," while fewer, less direct and more scattered perhaps than in the "Lucrece," are still considerable and noteworthy. In his narrative he has borrowed not only from Ovid's account of the same story, but from other fables, especially from those of Salmacis in the fourth book, and from the graphic picture of the hunting in Calydon, contained in the eighth book of the "Metamorphoses". The opening situation of the poem is given in the following lines from Ovid's "Venus and Adonis":—

"Sed labor insolitus jam me lassavit; et ecce
 Opportuna sua blanditur populus umbra;
 Datque torum cespes. Libet hac requiescere tecum
 (Et requievit) humo: pressitque et gramen, et ipsum.
 Inque sinu juvenis, posita cervice, reclinis
 Sic ait: ac mediis interserit oscula verbis."

While thus resting in the shade with Adonis, Venus tells him the celebrated story of Hippomanes and Atalanta, illustrating lover-like the beauty of Atalanta by a reference to that of Adonis and herself.

There is a clear recollection of this passage in the two genuine sonnets of the "Passionate Pilgrim," which seem to have been written originally as trial sketches or tentative lines for the opening of the contemplated poem—prelusive notes, as it were, before striking into the sustained music of the story:—

"Sweet Cytherea, sitting by a brook
 With young Adonis, lovely, fresh, and green,
 Did court the lad with many a lovely look,
 Such looks as none could look but beauty's queen.
 She told him stories to delight his ear"; etc.

And in the opening of the poem itself Venus, like a bold-faced suitor, says to Adonis:—

"Here, come and sit, where never serpent hisses,
 And being set, I'll smother thee with kisses.
 "Still she entreats, and prettily entreats,
 And to a pretty ear she tunes her tale;
 Still is he sullen, still he lours and frets,
 'Twixt crimson shame and anger ashy-pale;
 "Look how he can, she cannot choose but love;
 And by her fair immortal hand she swears,
 From his soft bosom never to remove,
 Till he take truce with her contending tears."

The central conflict of the story, that of ardent desire and passionate entreaty on the one hand, with

indignant surprise and cold disdain on the other, is reflected in the lines given below,¹ variations of which are found in many stanzas of the "Venus and Adonis".

What follows in Ovid's narrative is transferred by Shakespeare to Cytherea, and described in the second sonnet of the "Passionate Pilgrim". Again, the powerful description of the boar in the "Venus and Adonis" is derived from Ovid's account of the hunting in Calydon, and the best way, perhaps, to bring this fully out is to give the passages together. Ovid's lines quoted below² may be compared with Shakespeare's

¹ Tunc sic orsa loqui : "Puer o dignissime credi
Esse Deus : seu tu Deus es, potes esse Cupido :
Sive es mortalis, qui te genuere, beati ;
Et frater felix, et fortunata profecto,
Si qua tibi soror est, et quae dedit ubera nutrix.
Sed longe cunctis, longeque potentior illis,
Si qua tibi sponsa est, si quam dignabere taeda.
Haec tibi sive aliqua est, mea sit furtiva voluptas ;

Seu nulla est, ego sim : thalamumque ineamus eundem."
Nais ab his tacuit. Pueri rubor ora notavit,
Nescia quid sit amor ; sed et erubuisse decebat.
Hic color aprica pendentibus arbore pomis,
Aut ebori tincto est, aut sub candore rubenti,
Quum frustra resonant aera auxiliaria, Lunae.
Poscenti Nymphae sine fine sororia saltem
Oscula, jamque manus ad eburnea colla ferenti,
"Desine, vel fugio, tecumque, ait, ista relinquo".
(*Metam.*, bk. iv.)

² Sanguine et igne micant oculi, riget ardua cervix :
Et setae densis similes hastilibus horrent ;
[Stantque velut vallum, velut alta hastilia setae].
Fervida cum rauco, latos stridore per armos
Spuma fluit ; dentes aequantur dentibus Indis ;
Fulmen ab ore venit ; frondes adflatibus ardent.
Is modo crescenti segetes proculcat in herba ;

Sternitur incursu nemus, et propulsa fragorem
Silva dat.
Ille ruit, spargitque canes, ut quisque ruenti
Obstat, et obliquo latrantes dissipat ictu.
(*Metam.*, bk. viii.)

stanzas, which follow parts of the description with almost literal fidelity. On hearing that Adonis intends to hunt the boar, Venus gives the following account of the ruthless monster :—

- “ *On his bow-back he hath a battle set
Of bristly pikes, that ever threat his foes ;
His eyes like glow-worms, shine when he doth fret ;
His snout digs sepulchres where'er he goes ;
Being moved, he strikes whate'er is in his way,
And whom he strikes his crooked tushes slay.*
- “ *His brawny sides, with hairy bristles arin'd,
Are better proof than thy spear's point can enter ;
His short thick neck cannot be easily harm'd :
Being ireful, on the lion he will venture :
The thorny brambles and embracing bushes,
As fearful of him, part ; through whom he rushes.*
- “ *Alas, he naught esteems that face of thine,
To whom Love's eyes pay tributary gazes ;
Nor thy soft hands, sweet lips, and crystal eyne,
Whose full perfection all the world amazes :
But having thee at vantage,—wondrous dread !—
Would root these beauties as he roots the mead.*
- “ *O, let him keep his loathsome cabin still ;
Beauty hath nought to do with such foul fiends :
Come not within his danger by thy will ;
They that thrive well take counsel of their friends.*
-
- “ *But if thou needs wilt hunt, be rul'd by me ;
Uncouple at the timorous flying hare,
Or at the fox which lives by subtlety,
Or at the roe which no encounter dare :
Pursue these fearful creatures o'er the downs,
And on thy well-breath'd horse keep with thy hounds.”*

The warning contained in the last stanzas, the earnest appeal to Adonis to avoid the furious boar, and other savage beasts, but echoes the equally earnest

entreaty of Venus in Ovid's version of the story.¹ The lines in italics, which many may have thought a peculiarly Shakespearian touch, are, it will be seen, but a poetical version of the lines in Ovid.

Again, when after daybreak she listens eagerly for the hounds and the horn that may bring tidings of her love, and hearing the former "coasteth to the cry," she soon discovers by their deep baying that Adonis in his passionate love for exciting sport has disregarded her injunctions :—

"For now she knows it is no gentle chase,
But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud,
Because the cry remaineth in one place,
Where fearfully the dogs exclaim aloud :
Finding their enemy to be so curst,
They all strain courtesy who shall cope him first".

In the "Lucrece" Shakespeare follows faithfully the main lines of Ovid's story. Indeed, he may be said to have incorporated the whole of it with his own work. But he has developed the original sketch into a completed picture, suggested by his vivid realisation of the scene in all the fulness of its tragic and pathetic detail. The development is carried much further

¹ A fortibus abstinet apris :

Raptoresque lupos, armatosque unguibus ursos
Vitat, et armenti sertaratos caede leones.

Te quoque, ut hos timeas (si quid prodesse monendo
Possit), Adoni, monet : "Fortisque fugacibus esto,"
Inquit ; "in audaces non est audacia tuta.

Parce meo, juvenis, temerarius esse periclo :
Neve feras, quibus arma dedit Natura, lacesse,
Stet mihi ne magno tua gloria ; non movet aetas,
Nec facies, nec quae Venerem movere, leones,
Setigerosque sues, oculosque, animosque ferarum.
Fulmen habent acres in aduncis dentibus apri ;
Impetus est fulvis et vasta leonibus ira ;
Invisumque mihi genus est."

(*Metam.*, bk. x.)

than in the "Venus and Adonis," and the "Lucrece" is thus proportionately a considerably longer poem. But through the whole of the marvellous development it is still possible to trace the outline supplied by Ovid's comparatively brief but striking narrative. And the contrast at various points in the fuller evolution of the story brings into prominent relief the exuberance and vital force of Shakespeare's youthful imagination. A single example of this power will suffice. When at midnight, after striding noiselessly through the dark and silent corridors, Tarquin reaches the secret chamber of Lucrece, and rouses her with his rude assault, Ovid says:—

"Instat amans hostis precibus, pretioque, minisque :
Nec prece, nec pretio, nec movet ille minis".

Shakespeare expands these lines into ten stanzas, unfolding in order each class of villainous motive, the entreaties, the promises, and the threats, as they are urged with cruel force on the affrighted Lucrece's ear. Not only, however, in the full expansion of what is only suggested in the original is Shakespeare's imaginative and dramatic power displayed. It comes out in the rapid appropriation and skilful use of the slightest realistic touches which help to bring the picture vividly before the inward eye. No prose chronicler, for instance, would be likely to specify in his narrative the colour of Lucrece's hair. Ovid does this, however, in his description of her beauty, and Shakespeare repeats it in his exquisite picture of the sleeping Lucrece, when Tarquin's ruthless hand had "drawn the cloud that hides the silver moon".

"Her eyes, like marigolds, had sheath'd their light,
And canopied in darkness sweetly lay.
Till they might open to adorn the day.

"Her hair, *like golden threads*, play'd with her breath ;
 O modest wantons ! wanton modesty !
 Showing life's triumph in the map of death,
 And death's dim look in life's mortality :
 Each in her sleep themselves so beautify,
 As if between them twain there were no strife,
 But that life lived in death, and death in life."

But without going further into such minute points, I proceed to give the broader parallels between the "Lucrece" of Ovid and of Shakespeare. And first of the causes at work in rousing the hellish passion in Tarquin's breast, Ovid specially refers to the beauty and chastity of Lucrece.¹ And Shakespeare, beginning with the last line of the extract quoted below, goes back over Ovid's description, embracing as he goes its central points :—

"From the besieged Ardea all in post,
 Borne by the trustless wings of false desire,
 Lust-breathed Tarquin leaves the Roman host
 And to Collatium bears the lightless fire
 Which, in pale embers hid, lurks to aspire
 And girdle with embracing flames the waist
 Of Collatine's fair love, Lucrece the chaste.

"*Haply that name of 'chaste' unhappily set
 This bateless edge on his keen appetite ;*

¹ Interea juvenis furiatos regius ignes
 Concipit, et caeco raptus amore furit.
 Forma placet, niveusque color, flavique capilli,
 Quique aderat nulla factus ab arte decor.
 Verba placent, et vox, *et quod corrumpere non est ;*
 Quoque minor spes est, hoc magis ille cupit.

Ardet ; et injusti stimulis agitat^{us} amoris,
 Comparat indigno vimque dolumque toro.
 Exitus in dubio est ; audebimus ultima, dixit.
 Viderit, audentes Forsne Deusne juvet.
 Cepimus audendo Gabios quoque. Talia fatus,
 Ense latus cingit, tergaque pressit equi.

When Collatine unwisely did not let
To praise the clear unmatched red and white
Which triumph'd in that sky of his delight.

“ But some untimely thought did instigate
His all too timeless speed, if none of those :
His honour, his affairs, his friends, his state,
Neglected all, with swift intent he goes
To quench the coal which in his liver glows.
O rash false heat, wrapp'd in repentant cold,
Thy hasty spring still blasts, and ne'er grows old ! ”

Next with regard to the gracious reception he met with under Collatine's hospitable roof, and at the hands of his unsuspecting wife, we have in Ovid as follows :—

“ Accipit aerata juvenem Collatia porta,
Condere jam vultus sole parante suos.
Hostis, ut hospes, init penetrabilia Collatina ;
Comiter excipitur : sanguine junctus erat.
Quantum animis erroris inest ! parat inscia rerum
Infelix epulas hostibus illa suis.
Functus erat dapibus : poscunt sua tempora somni.”

Shakespeare expands these lines into the following somewhat more detailed account :—

“ When at Collatium this false lord arriv'd,
Well was he welcomed by the Roman dame,
Within whose face beauty and virtue striv'd
Which of them both should underprop her fame :
When virtue bragg'd, beauty would blush for shame.

“ This heraldry in Lucrece' face was seen,
Argued by beauty's red and virtue's white :
Of either's colour was the other queen,
Proving from world's minority their right.

“ This earthly saint, ador'd by this devil,
Little suspecteth the false worshipper :

For unstain'd thoughts do seldom dream on evil ;
 Birds never lim'd no secret bushes fear :
 So guiltless she securely gives good cheer
 And reverent welcome to her princely guest,
 Whose inward ill no outward harm express'd :

" For that he colour'd with his high estate,
 Hiding base sin in plaits of majesty :
 That nothing in him seem'd inordinate,
 Save sometime too much wonder of his eye.

" For then is Tarquin brought into his bed,
 Intending weariness with heavy spright ;
 For after supper long he questioned
 With modest Lucrece, and wore out the night :
 Now leaden slumber with life's strength doth fight."

Then with regard to the fatal midnight scene, Shakespeare, while following Ovid's outline point by point, realises so fully every thought and movement of the guilty Tarquin, in the execution of his ghastly purpose, that he not only expands the description, but repeats more than once some of its central features. Thus Tarquin's most terrible threat was given at the outset of the awful colloquy with Lucrece, repeated as the colloquy draws to a close, and again towards the end of the poem in the account of the outrage which Lucrece gives to her husband, her father, and her assembled friends. The last, as the more condensed summary, may be compared with Ovid's description.¹

¹ Nox erat, et tota lumina nulla domo.
 Surgit, et auratum vagina liberat ensem,
 Et venit in thalamos, nupta pudica, tuos.
 Utque torum pressit ; Ferrum, Lucretia, mecum est ;
 Natus, ait, Regis, Tarquiniusque vocor.
 Illa nihil : neque enim vocem viresque loquendi,
 Aut aliquid toto pectore mentis habet.
 Sed tremit, ut quondam stabulis deprensa relictis
 Parva sub infesto quum jacet agna lupo.

While, as I have said, all the points of the description are embraced and expanded in the earlier part of the narrative, they are briefly summed up in the following account from Lucrece's own lips :—

“ For in the dreadful dead of dark midnight,
With shining falchion in my chamber came
A creeping creature, with a flaming light,
And softly cried : ‘ Awake thou, Roman dame,
And entertain my love ; else lasting shame
On thee and thine this night I will inflict,
If thou my love's desire do contradict.

“ ‘ For some hard-favour'd groom of thine,’ quoth he,
‘ Unless thou yoke thy liking to my will,
I'll murder straight, and then I'll slaughter thee,
And swear I found you where you did fulfil
The loathsome act of lust, and so did kill
The lechers in their deed : this act will be
My fame, and thy perpetual infamy.’

“ With this, I did begin to start and cry ;
And then against my heart he set his sword,
Swearing, unless I took all patiently,
I should not live to speak another word ;
So should my shame still rest upon record,
And never be forgot in mighty Rome,
Th' adulterate death of Lucrece and her groom.

*Quid faciat ? pugnet ? vincetur femina pugna.
Clamet ? at in dextra, qui necet, ensis adest.
Effugiat ? positus urgetur pectora palmis ;
Nunc primum externa pectora tacta manu.
Instat amans hostis precibus, pretioque, minisque ;
Nec prece, nec pretio, nec movet ille minis.
Nil agis ; eripiam, dixit, pro crimine vitam ;
Falsus adulterii testis adulter erit.
Interimam famulum, cum quo deprensa fereris.
Succubuit famae victa puella metū.
Quid, victor, gaudes ? haec te victoria perdet.
Heu ! quanto regnis nox stetit una tuis !*

" Mine enemy was strong, my poor self weak,
 And far the weaker with so strong a fear :
 My bloody judge forbade my tongue to speak ;
 No rightful plea might plead for justice there."

In the earlier details of the description Shakespeare appropriates Ovid's simile of the wolf and the lamb, and adds others of a like kind which the situation naturally suggests, such as those of the grim lion fawning over his prey, the foul night-waking cat dallying with the weak and panting mouse in his hold-fast foot, the white hind under the gripe's sharp claws. He repeats, too, in various forms, Ovid's statement that the victory was a defeat, and would inevitably issue in Tarquin's destruction. Another parallel with minute verbal coincidences is the affecting scene with Lucrece, when, in the early morning, her husband and father arrive in answer to her hasty and urgent summons.¹


There is a final and striking parallel between the closing lines of Ovid's "Lucrece" and the concluding stanzas of Shakespeare's poem. Both describe the spirited conduct of Brutus in throwing off his long disguise, and coming forward to avenge the death of Lucrece. In this closing scene the agreement between the two poems, even in minute points, is almost as close as the genius of the different languages will admit of, but I must leave those who are specially interested in the subject to make this comparison for themselves.²

These parallels show, I think, that Shakespeare had Ovid before him in his earlier work, that he studied him carefully, and derived from his pages many hints

¹ "Fasti," ii. 813-32. "Lucrece," 1583-1610 (Globe edition).

² "Fasti," ii. 835-52. "Lucrece," 1807-20, and 1849-55 (Globe edition).

and suggestions for each of his descriptive poems, and especially for the second. Of course in any account of so striking a story as that of "Lucrece" the facts would be substantially the same. But it is in the poetical treatment of these facts that Shakespeare's obligations to Ovid are most apparent. Having dealt with the story in his vivid, dramatic manner, Ovid would naturally be a kind of model for Shakespeare when he selected it for his own poetical use. Warton, indeed (followed by other critics), having discovered that an English ballad on Lucrece existed in Shakespeare's time, suggested that this was the source whence Shakespeare derived his knowledge of the subject. The ballad, which I have not seen, may have been versified from the well-known prose version of the story in Painter's "Palace of Pleasure". This version has also been assumed by many commentators as the immediate source of Shakespeare's "Lucrece". But a comparison of the two poems with the prose story will show that Ovid and Shakespeare have a number of significant points in common not to be found in Painter's version, which is indeed little more than a paraphrase of Livy's brief account of the tragedy. The suggestions as to the purely English sources of Shakespeare's knowledge of the subject belong to an earlier era of criticism, when, under the influence of Farmer's essay, it was assumed that Shakespeare's literary materials were absolutely restricted to his own language, his knowledge of Latin extending no further than the earliest pages of the *accidence*. Hence, if any English account of a subject taken up by Shakespeare could be discovered, however meagre in substance or wretched in form, whether in chap-book prose or doggerel verse, it was at once brought



forward as a sufficient explanation of his work. But after the proofs I have given it will hardly, I think, be denied that Shakespeare was quite capable of studying the celebrated Roman story in the original sources, and that he certainly did so in relation to Ovid's version of it.

The "Lucrece" also contains, as the critics have pointed out, evident marks of indebtedness to Virgil. The elaborate details in the pictured "Fall of Troy," which helps to beguile the sad interval before the arrival of Collatine and his friend, seem clearly derived from the second book of the "Æneid". There is an obvious connection between the general cause or ground motive of the more famous tragedy and Lucrece's own dark fate. But by a skilful stroke the immediate agent in the ruin of cloud-kissing Ilion is associated as a kind of prototype with the destroyer of Lucrece's peace. The most prominent figure in the pictured tragedy as described by Lucrece is Sinon, and Sinon represents the same union of outward truth and inward guile, of saintly seeming and diabolical purpose, which had secured for Tarquin his fatal triumph. As Lucrece moralises on the figure, this tragic resemblance suddenly breaks upon her, arresting the soliloquy:—

"This picture she advisedly perus'd,
And chid the painter for his wondrous skill;
Saying, some shape in Sinon's was abus'd,
So fair a form lodg'd not a mind so ill;
And still on him she gaz'd, and gazing still,
Such signs of truth in his plain face she spied,
That she concludes the picture was belied.

"'It cannot be,' quoth she, 'that so much guile'—
(She would have said) 'can lurk in such a look :'
But Tarquin's shape came in her mind the while,

And from her tongue 'can lurk' from 'cannot' took;
 'It cannot be' she in that sense forsook,
 And turned it thus: 'It cannot be,' I find,
 But such a face should bear a wicked mind:

"'For even as subtle Sinon here is painted,
 So sober-sad, so weary and so mild
 (As if with grief or travail he had fainted),
 To me came Tarquin armed; so beguil'd
 With outward honesty, but yet defiled
 With inward vice: as Priam him did cherish,
 So did I Tarquin; so my Troy did perish'."

This ominous resemblance acquires all the greater significance from the fact that Tarquin himself had recently acted the part of Sinon in relation to the besieged inhabitants of Gabii. By his crafty fraud and spotted treachery (unusual among the Romans, as Livy carefully notes) he had, in fact, brought about the ruin of their city after it had been assaulted in vain. Like Sinon, having gone to the citizens of Gabii as a suppliant outcast, with a forged tale of woe, and displaying in his person the marks of cruel usage, Tarquin had roused their sympathy, and secured a welcome which he turned to account by conspiring against his friends and benefactors, and compassing their speedy destruction. Lucrece must have been well acquainted with this sinister exploit, and it would almost inevitably recur to her mind while gazing on the innocent-looking figure of perjured Sinon. In thus weaving Virgil's narrative of the fall of Troy into Ovid's story of "Lucrece," Shakespeare utilised his early studies, and produced in his own modest words a "pamphlet" of "untutored lines," which remains a unique example of pictured sorrow.

It need hardly be said that this free use of the

materials gathered from his early reading in the Roman poets does not in the least detract from the perfect originality, to say nothing of the beauty and power, of Shakespeare's work. In a mind of such vital force the best materials are, as I have said, little more than seeds hardly to be recognised in the developed fulness of the plant and beauty of the flower. The secret of poetical life cannot, indeed, be discovered by any examination of the soil in which it grew, or of the elements by which it was nurtured. In other words, no analysis of influences and conditions, however complete, can pierce the great mystery of creative genius. By a subtle alchemy it transmutes all inferior elements into its own pure and lustrous gold. None the less it is a problem of criticism to trace as far as possible the nature and uses of these elements. This is what I have endeavoured to do with regard to one section of the manifold materials that contributed to the growth and development of Shakespeare's unrivalled genius. And though I must defer for the present the wider evidence of his Roman studies, and especially of his familiarity with Ovid, which I have collected from a careful examination of the dramas, enough perhaps has been already adduced to illustrate the main position of these papers, that Shakespeare was a fair Latin scholar, and in his earlier life a diligent student of Ovid.

Before leaving the poems, it seems almost a duty to glance for a moment at their profounder ethical and reflective aspects. Mr. Swinburne has described them as narrative, or rather semi-narrative, and semi-reflective poems, and this expresses their true character. And it may justly be said that if Shakespeare follows Ovid in the narrative and descriptive part of his work, in the

vivid picturing of sensuous passion, he is as decisively separated from him in the reflective part, the higher purpose and ethical significance of the poems. The underlying subject in both is the same, the debasing nature and destructive results of the violent sensuous impulses, which in antiquity so often usurped the name of love, although in truth they have little in common with the nobler passion. The influence of fierce inordinate desire is dealt with by Shakespeare in these poems in all its breadth as affecting both sexes, and in all its intensity as blasting the most sacred interests and relationships of life. In working out the subject, Shakespeare shows his thorough knowledge of its seductive outward charm, of the arts and artifices, the persuasions and assaults, the raptures and languors of stimulated sensual passion. In this he is quite a match for the erotic and elegiac poets of classic times, and especially of Roman literature. He is not likely therefore in any way to undervalue the attraction or the power of what they celebrate in strains so fervid and rapturous. But, while contemplating the lower passion steadily in all its force and charm, he has at the same time the higher vision which enables him to see through and beyond it, the reflective insight to measure its results, and to estimate with remorseless accuracy its true worth. It is in this higher power of reflective insight, in depth and vigour of thought as well as feeling, that Shakespeare's earliest efforts are marked off even from the better works of those whom he took, if not as his masters, at least as his models and guides. He was himself full of rich and vigorous life, deepened by sensibilities of the rarest strength and delicacy; and in early youth had realised, in his own experience, the impetuous

force of passionate impulses. But his intellectual power no less than the essential depth and purity of his nobler emotional nature would effectually prevent his ever becoming "soft fancy's slave". A temporary access of passion would but rouse to fresh activity the large discourse looking before and after with which he was pre-eminently endowed. As such passionate moods subsided, he would meditate profoundly on the working and ultimate issues of these fierce explosive elements, if unrestrained by the higher influences of intellectual and moral life. A spirit so richly gifted, capable of soaring with unwearied wing into the highest heaven of thought and emotion, must have early felt not only that violent delights have violent ends, but that voluntary self-abandonment to the blind and imperious calls of appetite and passion is the most awful form of moral and social suicide.

These searching youthful experiences seem to have determined, almost unconsciously perhaps, Shakespeare's earliest choice of subjects. In any case, the brilliant deification of lawless passion in the "Venus and Adonis," but emphasises the social ruin produced by the destruction of female purity and truth it exemplifies. In the "Lucrece," the wider effects of unbridled lust are shown in the sacrifice of a noble life, the desolation of a faithful and united household, and the dethronement of a kingly dynasty. In working out the latter subject, Shakespeare has, as we have seen, skilfully interwoven, with the ruin of Tarquin's house, the destruction of Priam and his realm from similar causes. This theme he recurred to again at a later period, in the wonderful and perplexing drama of "Troilus and Cressida," one main purpose of which

appears to be that of criticising, under skilfully disguised forms, the early Greek conception of heroic motive, if not of heroic character. Shakespeare appears to have regarded the tale of Troy divine as at bottom little better than an idealised version of the savage custom of marriage by capture, a kind of poetical gloss on the barbarous tribal wars waged in early times about women. He seems at once to have exhibited and condemned with dramatic force and intensity the motive of the whole conflict in the character of Cressida. But it must be remembered that in the very earliest poem we have from Shakespeare's pen this higher note of the modern world is clearly sounded—the note that “Love is Lord of all,” and that love is something infinitely higher and more divine than the lawless vagrant passion which in pagan times passed under that name. To the modern mind, while the latter is blind, selfish, and often brutal in proportion to its strength, the former is full of sympathy and self-abnegation, of an almost sacred ardour and gentleness, humility and devotion, the very heart and crown of life. While the lower passion cares only for the gratification of an intensely egoistic appetite, the nobler is ever supremely concerned for the highest good of its object. This contrast is expressed with reflective emphasis in the following stanzas towards the close of the “Venus and Adonis” :—

“Call it not Love, for Love to heaven is fled,
Since sweating Lust on earth usurp'd his name;
Under whose simple semblance he hath fed
Upon fresh beauty, blotting it with blame;
Which the hot tyrant stains and soon bereaves,
As caterpillars do the tender leaves.

"Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,
But Lust's effect is tempest after sun ;
Love's gentle spring doth always fresh remain,
Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done ;
Love surfeits not, Lust like a glutton dies ;
Love is all truth, Lust full of forged lies."

In this reproof of the pagan goddess of love, the higher note of the modern world is, as I have said, struck fully and clearly. It is repeated with tragic emphasis in the "Lucrece," deepened in the sonnets, and developed through all the gracious range of higher female character in the dramas.

Nowhere indeed is the vital difference in the social axes of the ancient and modern world more vividly seen, than in the contrast between the Lesbias, Delias, and Corinnas of Roman poetry, and the Mirandas, Portias, and Imogens of Shakespeare's dramas. In the one we have the monotonous ardours and disdains, the gusts and glooms, the tricks and artifices belonging to the stunted life of lower impulse ; in the other, the fadeless beauty and grace, the vivacity and intelligence, the gentleness and truth of perfect womanhood. I hope, hereafter, to say something more on this tempting theme. Meanwhile, as I have had to emphasise Shakespeare's relation to the poet laureate of wandering love, it seemed right in passing to point out the higher features by which he is separated from Ovid, even in the early poems which owe most to his influence.

SHAKESPEARIAN GLOSSARIES.¹

It is to us a matter of sincere regret that the observations we have now to make on this important edition of the works of Shakespeare should have been unavoidably postponed until death has removed the amiable and accomplished editor, Mr. Dyce, beyond the reach of human applause or criticism. We have been engaged for some time in a careful examination of his work, and we had hoped to pay him on this occasion the tribute due to so much learning, candour, and ingenuity. That tribute can now only be offered to his memory ; but few names are more honourably connected with our older literature, and especially with Shakespearian criticism, than that of Alexander Dyce. In his second edition of the plays of our great dramatist, the corruptions which infest the earlier folios are to a great extent purged away, and though in some passages what Shakespeare actually wrote still remains an unsolved, if not an insoluble problem, his dramas are vindicated in the main

¹ 1. *The Works of William Shakespeare.* The Text Revised by the Rev. Alexander Dyce. In 9 vols. Second Edition. 1865.

2. *The Works of William Shakespeare.* Edited by Howard Staunton. With copious Notes, Glossary, Life, etc. In 8 vols. 1869.

3. *The Works of William Shakespeare.* Edited by William George Clarke, M.A., Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College, Cambridge ; and William Aldis Wright, M.A., Librarian of Trinity College.

Edinburgh Review, July, 1869.

from the reproaches which careless stage-transcribers and blundering player-editors had brought upon them. Mr. Dyce has given in the best form the best results of three great schools of critics and commentators, and he has made many valuable additions to their labours which will be discovered by diligent students on a careful examination of the text. He was a master of all the learning essential to the correction and illustration of Shakespeare, and combined with this wide and exact knowledge what is at least as important to an editor, sound judgment and rare critical sagacity. The text of the new edition illustrates the editor's fine discriminative sense, while the notes and glossary, to which we shall presently refer, bear ample testimony to his varied and accurate learning. In all these respects, the new work is a great advance on Mr. Dyce's earlier edition of Shakespeare. In that edition, as Mr. Dyce himself felt, he dealt far too timidly with the text, admitting only a very few even of the best conjectural emendations, and retaining readings that were obviously doubtful and in many instances corrupt. In the last edition he followed the wiser plan of exercising his own judgment freely, and giving in every doubtful passage the best emendation criticism has suggested. In some of the more difficult passages his own knowledge of Shakespeare's language and the literature of the Elizabethan age enabled him to supply a better reading than any previous critic had proposed. The result is the best text of Shakespeare yet produced.

The only recent editions that challenge attention with Mr. Dyce's are those of Mr. Staunton and Messrs. Clarke and Wright, the Cambridge editors. So far as excellence of text is concerned, there is, however, hardly

any comparison between these editions and that of Mr. Dyce. Mr. Staunton avowedly retains a number of doubtful readings, many of the better conjectural emendations being relegated to the notes. But his wide reading in the literature of Shakespeare's time has enabled him to throw some light on doubtful passages and to assist in clearing up some obscure allusions. With regard to the Cambridge text, Mr. Dyce's is so incomparably superior that it is hardly fair to compare them. Considering the circumstances of its publication and the learning and critical accomplishments of the editors, it is a kind of literary problem indeed how it comes to pass that the text of this edition is so extremely defective. It may perhaps be that the business of continually collecting and arranging what may be called the raw materials of criticism has the unhappy effect of confusing and temporarily paralysing the critical faculty. Whatever the cause may be, however, the result is unfortunate, the edition being in many important respects a scholarly and useful one. The prefaces are written with great care, and the collection and orderly exhibition of the various readings so exhaustive and complete as to render the work almost indispensable to critical students of Shakespeare. But the text in many passages is either disfigured by the blunders of the early folios or weakened by the selection of comparatively worthless emendations. We should like to show this by a detailed examination of various passages, but space forbids. All we can do is to give an illustration or two in passing. In Sir Richard Vernon's spirited description of Prince Hal and his martial comrades setting out on the campaign against Hotspur and Douglas, Mr. Dyce reads, according to the best emendation of a corrupt line, as follows :—

“ All furnish'd, all in arms ;
 All plum'd like estridges that *wing* the wind ;
 Bated like eagles having lately bath'd ;
 Glittering in golden coats, like images ;
 As full of spirit as the month of May,
 And gorgeous as the sun at midsummer”.

The reading of the folio is :—

“ All plum'd like estridges, that *with* the wind,”

which makes no sense at all. The Cambridge editors, however, retain this manifest corruption of the passage, rejecting Rowe's emendation of *wing*, and Mr. Dyce's justification of it, on the following grounds: “ The phrase ‘wing the wind’ seems to apply to ostriches (for such is unquestionably the meaning of ‘estridges’) less than to any other birds. Mr. Dyce quotes a passage from Claudian (‘In Eutropium,’ ii. 310-313), to justify it:

‘Vasta velut Libyæ venantum vocibus ales
 Cum premitur, calidas cursu transmittit arenas,
 Inque modum veli, sinuatis flamine pennis,
 Pulverulenta volat.’

But this means that the bird spreads its wings like a sail bellying with the wind—a different thing from ‘winging the wind’.” To this weak reasoning Mr. Dyce replies:—

“ The Cambridge editors, in expounding the lines of Claudian, take no notice of the important word ‘volat,’ by which he means, of course, that the ostrich, *when once her wings are filled with the wind, flies along the ground* (though she does not mount into the air); and I still continue to think that the whole description answers very sufficiently to that of her ‘*winging the wind*’. Let me add, that the late Samuel Rogers (‘a name’ to me ‘for ever dear’) has applied the verb ‘*wing*’ to the flight of the ostrich; and it must be allowed that, whatever the deficiencies of his poetry in

some respects, he justly prided himself on never violating propriety of expression :—

‘ Such to their grateful ear the gush of springs,
 Who course *the ostrich*, as away *she wings* ;
 Sons of the desert, who delight to dwell
 ‘Mid kneeling camels round the sacred well’.

Columbus, canto viii.”

Mr. Dyce’s reply is more than sufficient to meet the slender objection of the Cambridge editors. But that they should have deliberately rejected an emendation so happy as to be almost certainly a restoration of the text on such trivial and merely pedantic grounds, throws some discredit on their critical judgment. The truth is that in almost any description of the ostrich Shakespeare might have read, two facts would be specially emphasised—its extreme swiftness and the motion of the wings in running. Every account would explain that the wings, while unable to lift the bird into the air, were always used in its flight, and the volant motion combined with the extreme pedestrian rapidity would make the ruffled plumes of the scudding bird a sufficiently apt simile for crested and nodding helms. This is indeed the ground of the comparison of the moving ostrich wings to the sails of a ship, which is a common one not only with the poets but with the writers on civil and natural history. Thus Herodian, in his *Life of the Emperor Commodus*, says that he was so admirable a marksman that, using crescent-headed arrows, he would repeatedly at the height of their speed cut off the heads of Mauritanian ostriches, which were extremely swift of foot, their plumage bellying out like sails in their flight. And Ælian—to quote Gesner’s version—gives the same general descrip-

tion in greater detail. "*Avis est densa pennis, sed in altum volare non potest: currit tamen celerrime, et utrinque in alas ingruens ventus, tanquam vela eas extendit et sinuat.*" No doubt it is still open to the Cambridge editors to reply that in this case it is the wind that wings the ostrich, not the ostrich that wings the wind; but, as a serious criticism, this is about on a level with the celebrated question, why the dog wags his tail, as a serious problem in natural history.

We can only notice one other passage which will enable us to bring the three recent editions together—the conclusion of Hamlet's speech referring to the Danish custom of carousal more honoured in the breach than in the observance:—

"So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin),
By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausible manners; that these men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: The dram of eale
Doth all the noble substance of a dout,
To his own scandal".

This, the folio reading of the last three lines, is evidently corrupt, as it conveys no sense at all. But, unmeaning as it is, the passage is retained both by Mr. Staunton and the Cambridge editors, although

more than one plausible emendation has been suggested. Knight and Collier read :—

“The dram of *ill*

Doth all the noble substance often *dout*
To his own scandal”.

The objection to *dout* is obvious, for, if that were the reading, the concluding clause, *to his own scandal*, would be altogether superfluous. Mr. Dyce, on the natural supposition that the original reference was to the little leaven leavening the whole lump, reads :—

“The dram of evil

Doth all the noble substance oft debase
To his own scandal,”

which appears to us the best emendation of this doubtful and corrupt passage yet suggested.

The ample glossary which fills the last volume of the work is, next to the superior character of the text, the most important and original feature of Mr. Dyce's new edition. For ordinary readers indeed, as well as for critical students, it is a most welcome novelty. Not that a Shakespearian glossary is in itself anything new. Almost every edition of any mark has a glossary more or less extensive. But these glossaries are at best little more than lists of archaic and unusual terms with a single meaning attached, but without literary examples or philological illustration of any kind. They just enable the reader to attach some meaning to an unknown word without throwing any light on its form, origin, shades of meaning or contemporary use. This might be a satisfactory plan enough in dealing with a minor poet, or with a writer of only secondary interest and value belonging to the same period. But it is hardly sufficient when Shakespeare's characteristic dic-

tion, his niceties of language, the rarer elements of his vocabulary, and his finer shades of meaning are the subject of illustration. In most critical editions many of the rarer and more expressive archaic terms and phrases are explained in the notes, and this does away with the necessity of detailed illustration in the glossary. But making due allowance for the partial and scattered interpretation of critical words and phrases, it must be confessed that, excepting Mr. Dyce's, all the Shakespearian glossaries hitherto published are singularly meagre and imperfect. Most of them are seriously defective even as lists of words, many are vague and even inaccurate in the exhibition of meanings, and none attempt anything like literary or philological illustration. As a mere list the "Glossarial Index" of the Variorum edition is one of the fullest, but it is at once much more and much less than a glossary proper. It is an index to the notes which contain references to phrases, persons, places, and customs, as well as to the obscurer archaic, provincial, and technical words to be found in Shakespeare.

Of recent glossaries those of Mr. Staunton and the Globe edition are tolerably full and accurate as far as they go, but they are formed on the narrow type of their predecessors, and share their manifold imperfections. Even Mr. Dyce's ample glossary, as we shall presently see, is by no means perfect. Both in plan and execution, however, it comes far nearer to what a complete Shakespearian glossary ought to be than anything previously attempted. In range and comprehensiveness, indeed, the plan is all that could be desired. Mr. Dyce includes the explanation, not only of all unusual words, but of common words used in

unusual senses, or with shades of meaning at all different from their present signification. His plan also includes the explanation of phrases as well as words, of proverbial sayings, of obsolete customs and obscure allusions, the latter almost always, however, embodying some word that requires special elucidation. Some critics may perhaps be disposed to regard the plan as too extensive, but this is an error in the right direction. The Shakespearian glossarist can hardly take too wide a view of his duty, or be too careful and minute in its execution, so that he keeps himself to the work in hand. The English of Shakespeare and his time—in other words, what is known as the Elizabethan era—pre-eminently deserves to be carefully studied and thoroughly known. At present, however, this is very far from being the case. There are still difficulties connected with Shakespeare's phraseology which require to be explained, and after a century and a half of critical research the language of the Elizabethan era as a whole is even yet only very imperfectly known. This fact is in itself a striking testimony to the importance of the period in a philological point of view—the almost inexhaustible wealth of its linguistic resources. It is, as every critical student of the language knows, by far the most important period in its history, the era of its fullest spontaneous development, when its hidden stores of vigorous diction were brought into general use, and its latent powers of reflective, emotional, and imaginative expressiveness were for the first time called freely into play. It is moreover the organ of the noblest literature of any age or country, of the profoundest feelings, most pregnant thoughts, tenderest fancies, and richest imaginative conceptions ever clothed in

human language. On both grounds therefore, as the well-head of our mother-tongue, and the instrument of its noblest literature, the language of this period ought still to engage the attention of English critics, and if farther stimulus were needed there are other reasons of a more practical kind in favour of the study. It has a direct connection with the living wants and growing requirements of our widely diffused English tongue. We are every day borrowing, or rather reclaiming, nervous, apt, and picturesque expressions from the poets and thinkers of that early period; and if this process is to go on—the only one by which the language can be permanently purified and enriched—it is of the first importance that we should know the Elizabethan speech as intimately as possible. To help in its elucidation is, in fact, for the present the most important philological task to which the English critic can devote himself.

We are far, therefore, from thinking Mr. Dyce has exceeded his duty as an expositor in devoting a volume of five hundred pages to the explanation of Shakespeare's language—to the words and phrases, meanings and allusions, that require or admit illustrative notes and comments. Indeed, considering the mass of varied material at his disposal for this purpose, he must have exercised an amount of self-control somewhat rare in a Shakespearian commentator, to have brought his expository learning within so comparatively moderate a compass. These materials, including the critical labours of the long line of editors from Rowe in 1709 to Staunton in 1859, and the numerous volumes of illustrative comments published by the miscellaneous critics who were not also editors, constitute a vast

library of Shakespearian literature. Mr. Dyce has the contents of this library at his finger-ends, and that he should have used them so sparingly is an additional proof of his sound judgment and critical self-control. With few exceptions he gives what may be called the necessities of exposition, the most useful and essential points in the explanation of words and phrases, without indulging in the luxury of multiplied literary examples and extended critical comment. In some places, indeed, he seems to us to have carried this abstinence too far, as, for instance, in not appending to the more important archaic words at least one example of their actual use. The execution of Mr. Dyce's plan is indeed open to criticism on one or two other points; and we propose devoting the rest of our space to a somewhat detailed examination of the slight imperfections still attaching to his valuable glossary.

The vocabulary is the first point, and from what we have already said it will be seen that as a mere list of words Mr. Dyce's glossary is a great advance on any previous attempt of the kind. This advance may be farther estimated by comparing it with the two fullest recent glossaries formed on the old type—those of Mr. Staunton and the *Globe Shakespeare*. On a rough calculation the *Globe* glossary contains about two thousand words; Mr. Staunton's about two thousand five hundred; while Mr. Dyce's largely exceeds double this number. The large increase is due in part to the explanation of doubtful passages and obscure phrases and allusions, and in part to the large number of common words used with shades of meaning slightly different from their ordinary signification, which Mr. Dyce has for the first time collected and inserted. His

aim is not only to give a full account of every uncommon word, but to include every term used by Shakespeare with the slightest shade of special meaning. This department of the work is indeed carried to some excess, as we have such entries as *dumps*, low spirited; *crab*, a wild apple; *close*, secret; *bold*, confident; *fearful*, timid; *farrow*, a litter of pigs; *leech*, a physician; *merit*, reward; *unprised*, not valued; *unreconcilable*, irreconcilable; *trenchant*, cutting, sharp; and a number more of the same kind. Nevertheless, Mr. Dyce has overlooked several unusual words, and omitted or given very imperfectly a considerable number of special significations. In attempting to supply some of these omissions we hope to contribute something towards the more perfect interpretation of Shakespeare's language.

We may begin the list of omitted words by an example or two from "Hamlet". In the first scene of the second act towards the close of the very characteristic conversation Polonius has with his servant Reynaldo as to the finding out what Laertes is doing in Paris by cautious and distant questioning among his acquaintance, Polonius says:—

"See you now ;
Your bait of falsehood take this carp of truth :
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With *windlaces*, and with assays of bias,
By indirections find deductions out ".

The word *windlace* used in this passage is a somewhat rare and curious one, requiring special illustration far more than numbers Mr. Dyce has included in his list. But, so far as we are aware, it has never yet been

noticed by any Shakespearian critic or commentator. The only way of accounting for this strange omission is by supposing that, if noticed at all, it must have been taken for windlass in the modern sense as designating a wheel and axle for raising weights, the only form and meaning in which the word is now known. But it is difficult to imagine this, as it is at variance with the context, and destroys the special meaning of the passage. No doubt the word in both cases is radically the same, but we have retained it only in the secondary signification of a mechanical instrument. In Shakespeare's day, however, *windlace*, literally a winding, was used to express taking a circuitous course, fetching a compass, making an indirect advance, or more colloquially beating about the bush instead of going directly to a place or object, and in this sense it exactly harmonises with the other phrase used by Polonius to express the same thing—"assays of bias"—attempts in which, instead of going straight to the object, we seek to reach it by a curved or winding course, the bias gradually bringing the ball round to the jack. It was the more necessary and important for the Shakespeare critics to bring this meaning fully out, as both word and meaning have been overlooked or misunderstood even by our best lexicographers. Todd mistakes the meaning altogether, and quoting this very example from Shakespeare, defines it "a handle by which anything is turned," although he had close at hand instances of the verb formed from the noun to guide him aright. Richardson, again, is ignorant of the special noun, and amidst a multitude of literary illustrations of its cognates has only one example of its use. It occurs, however, not unfrequently in books with which

Shakespeare was familiar. Thus, in Golding's *Ovid*, we have the following :—

" By chance the very selfe same day the virgins of the towne,
Of old and ancient custom, bear in baskets on their crowne,
Beset with garlands fresh and gay, and stowde with flowers sweete,
To Pallas tower such sacrifice as which was of custom meet.
The winged God beholding them returning in a troupe,
Continued not directly forth but gan me down to stoupe,
And fetched a *windlasse* round about. And as the hungry kite,
Beholding unto sacrifice a bullock ready dight,
Doth soar about his wished prey desirous for to snatch,
But that he dareth not for such as stand about and watch ;
So Mercury with nimble wings doth keep a lower gate
About Minerva's lofty towers in *round and wheeling rate*."

The original of which the sixth and seventh lines are the translation is :—

"Inde revertentes Deus adspicit ales : iterque
Non agit in rectum, sed in orbem curvat eundem ".

The seventh book supplies us with another example as follows :—

" There was not farre fro thence,
About the middle of the lannd, a rising ground, from whence
A man might overlook the fields. I gat me to the knap
Of this same hill, and there beheld of this strange course the hap,
In which the beast seems one while caught, and ere a man would
think
Doth quickly give the grewnd the slip, and from his biting shrink.
And like a wiley fox he runs not forth directly out,
Nor makes a *windlas* over all the champion fields about ;
But doubling and indenting still avoids his enemies lips,
And turning short, as swift about as spinning wheel he whips
To disappoint the snatch."

These examples make the meaning of the word as used by Shakespeare quite clear, and they help to bring fully out the sense of a very significant line which must

hitherto have perplexed most readers who have thought at all about it.

Another word overlooked by Mr. Dyce occurs in the fifth scene of the fourth act, at the meeting between the wildered Ophelia and Laertes on his return to Elsinore :—

“*Oph.* There's rosemary, that's for remembrance ; pray you, love, remember ; and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

“*Laertes.* A *document* in madness,—thoughts and remembrance fitted.”

The word *document* is here used in its earlier and etymological sense of instruction, lesson, teaching. This early signification is well illustrated in the following stanzas from the “Faery Queene” :—

“ Now when their wearie limbes with kindly rest,
And bodies were refresht with due repast,
Faire Una gan Fidelia faire request,
To have her knight into her schoolehouse plaste
That of her heavenly learning he might taste,
And heare the wisdom of her words divine.
She graunted, and that knight so much agraste
That she him taught celestiall discipline,
And opened his dull eyes, that light mote in them shine.

“ And that her sacred booke, with blood ywrit,
That none could read, except she did them teach,
She unto him disclosed every whit,
And heavenly *documents* thereout did preach,
That weaker wit of man could never reach ;
Of God, of grace, of justice, of free will ;
That wonder was to heare her goodly speech :
For she was able with her words to kill,
And raise againe to life the hart that she did thrill.”

The word was habitually used in this sense in Shakespeare's day and for about a century later, but has now wholly lost its primitive signification, being restricted

to the secondary sense of written precepts, instructions, and evidences. It ought therefore to have found a place in Mr. Dyce's glossary, but we believe, as in the case of windlass, it has never yet been noticed by any critic or commentator.

In Ophelia's next speech also occurs a phrase which has not been explained by the commentators, and on which Mr. Dyce throws no light. In distributing her sprigs and flowers Ophelia, according to the common interpretation, gives to the king fennel and columbines as emblems of cajolery and ingratitude, and to the queen rue, of which she also takes some herself, adding: "You may wear your rue with a difference". The phrase "bearing a difference" is a well-known one in heraldry; but what the difference in this case is has not been indicated beyond a suggestion, that with Ophelia rue means simply sorrow, but that as worn by the queen it should denote contrition as well as sorrow. But this at best is a cold and abstract fancy out of harmony with the "document" of Ophelia's other gifts. There is an obvious method in her madness, her nothings being, as Laertes says, "more than matter" in their direct and pathetic significance. The difference in the queen's case ought, moreover, to be some quality of rue emblematic of her character as shown in her conduct, and portrayed in Hamlet's bitter denunciations. This quality or difference may probably be found indicated in the following extract from Cogan's *Haven of Health*: "The second property is that rue abateth carnal lust, which is also confirmed by Galen. . . . Yet *schola Salerni* in this point maketh a difference between men and women, for they say:—

'Ruta viris coitum minuit, mulieribus auge'.

Because the nature of the woman is waterish and cold, rue heateth and drieth, therefore (they say) it stirreth them more to carnal lust; but it diminisheth the nature of men, which is of temperature like unto the air hot and moist." In this case the difference would be emblematic of the queen's hasty return to the nuptial state, and a severe reflection on her indecent marriage. Each of Ophelia's gifts would then be "documentary": thoughts and remembrance to the faithful lover, ingratitude and guile to the faithless king, and eager sensual pleasure to the luxurious queen.

Mr. Dyce of course notices the word *crants* occurring in the priest's speech to Laertes at Ophelia's burial, but he does not illustrate in any detail the history of the word, or the custom it represents. He says, "*crants*, a crown, a chaplet, a garland"; and after giving a short etymological quotation from Jamieson's dictionary, he refers the reader to a note on the word at the end of the drama. The substance of the note is a quotation from one of the latest critics, Mr. W. N. Lettsom, and that such an extract should contain a summary and expansion of previous commentaries on the passage shows how little, in some cases, has been done to illustrate the special form and meaning of many of Shakespeare's characteristic terms and allusions. Mr. Lettsom says: "Most of the editors explain *crants* by garlands; but the German *kranz* is singular, and the singular seems indispensable here. From a note to Prior's Danish ballads it would seem that young unmarried Danish ladies wear, or wore, chaplets of pearls; at least, fair Elsy is described as wearing one; and the translator says that this is the

same as the virgin *crant* (sic) of Ophelia." That *crants* should have been considered plural in Johnson's day is perhaps natural enough, as the good doctor himself was dependent on an anonymous correspondent for the inaccurate information that "*kranz* is the German word for garlands". But that any modern editor should have fallen into such a mistake is, to say the least, surprising. *Crants* is singular not only in German, but in the Scandinavian and Teutonic dialects generally, including Lowland Scotch. Thus Killian gives "*kranzt*, corona, corolla, sertum," and Haldorson "*kranz*, sertum, corona," while in Lowland Scotch the singular is *crance* and the plural *crancis*.

With regard to the custom of maidens wearing a virgin crants or garland, and having it laid on their bier at interment, all that Shakespearian critics know of the matter appears to be summed up in Mr. Lettsom's cautious statement that "it would seem that young unmarried Danish maidens wear, or wore, chaplets of pearl". But this custom, which was at one time almost universal in Europe, still prevails throughout the North, and is fully explained by Weber in his introduction and notes to the ballad of Child Axelvold:—

"As one of the most affecting passages (where Child Axelvold's mother takes off her coronet) derives its beauty entirely from fashions and usages little thought of in this country, it may not be improper here to subjoin some such account of them as may tend to illustrate the text.

"The maiden coronet, or tire for the head, although of various forms and qualities, according to the taste or condition of the wearer, was uniformly put at the top; and no one covered her head till she had forfeited her right to wear the coronet, chaplet, garland, or bandeau. This was the case in many parts of Scotland,

till within the last twenty or thirty years. The ballads and songs of the northern nations, as will be seen by the specimen we have produced, abound with allusions to this very ancient usage; and everybody in Scotland knows

‘The lassie lost her silken snood
A-puing o’ the bracken’.

“Of the coronets worn by the peasant girls in Livonia, Courland, Esthonia, Lithuania, etc., a curious assortment has been sent me by my learned friend, the Reverend Gustar von Bergmann, pastor of Ruien, in Livonia; and some of them are very picturesque and elegant. The older ones, worn by brides on their wedding-day, are simple bandeaus of dyed horse-hair, curiously plaited, diversified, and figured, which will be referred to elsewhere. The others are cloth, silk, velvet, etc., tastefully ornamented with beads, spangles, gold and silver embroidery, precious stones, artificial emblematic flowers, etc., and some raised before in form of a re-troverted crescent, and tyed with a ribbon behind.”

Then after noticing the prevalence of the custom both in ancient and modern times, especially amongst the pagan Gothic tribes of the North, he adds:—

“Among Christians, our Lady the Queen of Heaven was the successor of the Gothic Freija, and to our Lady the maidens continued to dedicate their virgin garlands as they had formerly done to her predecessor. This has in a great measure been done away with by the zeal, whether discreet or otherwise, of the clergy. But a usage of so long standing had too fast a hold on the prejudices of the people to be easily abolished, and the walls of the country churches in Livonia and Courland still display multitudes of garlands, and white chaplets of flowers, evergreens, and aromatic herbs, which, after having been carried to the grave on the coffin of the deceased, have been nailed up there by the parents, relatives, or lovers of maidens who have died in the parish.”

It will be seen from this extract that the burial of a northern maiden is still appropriately marked, as in the case of Ophelia, by the presence of her “virgin crants, and maiden strewments”.

We may next select a more general example or two from "Macbeth". In the soliloquy in the beginning of the third act, in which the motives for the murder of Banquo are reviewed, Macbeth says :—

"There is none but he
Whose being I do fear ; and, under him,
My *genius* is rebuk'd ; as it is said
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar ".

Again, in the closing scene of the play, Macduff says :—

"Despair thy charm ;
And let the *angel* whom thou still hast serv'd
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd ".

And in the passage from "Antony and Cleopatra" parallel with the first :—

"Ant. Say to me,
Whose fortunes shall rise higher, Cæsar's or mine ?
"Sooth. Cæsar's.
Therefore, O Antony, stay not by his side :
Thy *demon* (that's thy spirit which keeps thee) is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
Where Cæsar's is not ; but near him thy *angel*
Becomes a Fear, as being o'erpower'd ; therefore
Make space enough between you."

Mr. Dyce makes no reference to the special sense in which Shakespeare uses the term "*genius*" and "*angel*," in these and other similar passages. He ought, surely, to have explained that these terms refer to the spirit, the ruling intellectual power, the higher psychical energy, the rational soul as opposed to the irascible nature. According to the physiology and psychology of the time, the soul was regarded as essentially a spiritual nature temporarily united with mortal faculties and a mortal frame which it wields as instruments.

While perfectly distinct from these instruments and sometimes at war with them, the rational soul during the earthly life is still moved by their perturbations, and shares to a certain extent in their vicissitudes. But at all times it has an existence of its own apart from the body which it leaves naturally at death, and may do so exceptionally during life, appearing for a moment in a visible shape as a wraith or shadow, the spectral counterpart of the living man. In mediæval theology, indeed, the rational soul is an angel, the lowest in the hierarchy for being clothed for a time in the perishing vesture of the body. But it is not necessarily an angel of light. It may be a good or evil genius, a guardian angel or a fallen spirit, a demon of light or darkness. But whatever its nature, it rules, guards, keeps and controls the man, wielding the lower powers as instruments to its own issues. The poetical representations of this common view approach at times the more objective conception of the Greek or Socratic demon and the Roman genius, as well as the theological notion of distinct guardian or ruling spirits. And in the second passage from "Macbeth" the term may probably have, with the ordinary meaning, an objective reference of this kind. In Shakespeare, however, the terms angel and genius are usually employed to denote the higher nature of man, the rational guiding soul or spirit, which in connection with the mortal instruments determines his character and fate. In Macbeth this spirit is that of insatiable and guilty ambition. It is this aspiring lawless genius that Banquo's innate loyalty of heart and rectitude of purpose silently rebuked. This was the angel he still had served, whose evil whisperings had prepared him for the dark suggestions of the weird

sisters, and inclined him to trust their fatal incantations. But this may be easily misunderstood without some definite knowledge of the sense in which the term angel is used. Even so intelligent a student of Shakespeare as Mrs. Fanny Kemble is led away by associations connected with the word into a somewhat irrelevant and erroneous panegyric. In a paper on the character of Macbeth recently contributed to one of the monthly periodicals, she exclaims, referring to Macduff's speech already quoted: "Noteworthy, in no small degree, is this word 'angel' here used by Macduff. Who but Shakespeare would not have written 'devil'? But what a tremendous vision of terrible splendour the word evokes! What a visible presence of gloomy glory (even as of the great prince of pride, ambition, and rebellion) seems to rise in lurid majesty, and overshadow the figure of the baffled votary of evil!"

Mr. Dyce makes no attempt to explain either of these words except by quoting a sentence from the late Professor Craik on the well-known speech of Brutus:—

"Since Cassius first did whet me against Cæsar
I have not slept.
Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream:
The *genius* and the *mortal instruments*
Are then in council; and the state of a man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection."

In reference to this Professor Craik, as quoted by Mr. Dyce, remarks: "Apparently by the *genius* we are to understand the contriving and immortal mind, and most

probably the *mortal instruments* are the earthly passions". But to any one familiar with the physics and psychology of the time it would be at once evident that the *genius* is the reasonable soul or angel, and the *mortal instruments* the bodily powers through which it works, in particular the vital and animal spirits which are the medium of sensation and motion, and the physical organs of memory, imagination and discourse, which according to the current physiology were three several chambers in the brain. The acute Spanish physician Huarte, in his *Examination of Men's Wits*, an English translation of which was published in 1594, gives a full account of the whole theory of the genius or soul and its mortal instruments. The following extract will show that Shakespeare's allusions to the connection of body and soul, and the very language in which they are couched, represent the common doctrine on the subject:—

"The reasonable soul making abode in the body, it is impossible that the same can performe contrary and different operations, if for each of them it use not a particular instrument. This is plainly seen in the power of the soule, which performeth divers operations in the outward senses, for every one hath his particular composition: the eyes have one, the ears have another, the smelling another, and the feeling another; and if it were not so, there should be no more but one sort of operations, and that should all be seeing, tasting or feeling, for the instrument determines and rules the power for one action, and for no more.

"By this so plain and manifest a matter which passeth through the outward senses, we may gather what that is in the inward. With this selfe power of the soule we understand, imagine, and remember. But if it be true, that every worke requires a particular instrument, it behooveth of necessitie, that within the braine there be one instrument for the understanding, one for the imagination, and another different from them for the memorie. For if

all the brain were instrumentalised after one selfe manner, either the whole should be memorie, or the whole understanding, or the whole imagination. But we see that these are very different operations, and therefore it is of force that there be also a varietie in the instruments."

Being physically conditioned, the soul, though immortal, is disturbed by the perturbations of the lower faculties, especially of the senses and imagination. The purer energies of the soul are for a time paralysed, as it were, by any strong and sudden shock, sensuous or imaginative, "function being smothered in surmise," and the whole internal kingdom thrown into a state of commotion until the disturbed and scattered powers are rallied and united for action. The same drama affords other examples of angel used in much the same sense. Mark Antony in his address to the Roman crowd says :—

"For Brutus, as you know, was Cæsar's *angel*".

That is to say, the two were knit so close in friendship, were so identified in mutual regard, that Brutus was, as it were, Cæsar's soul, his *alter ego*. And when this close relationship is darkened by the assassination, the soul of Brutus is troubled, and the unbodied Cæsar naturally becomes, according to the midnight visit in the tent, his evil spirit :—

"How ill this taper burns !—Ha ! who comes here ?

I think it is the weakness of mine eyes

That shapes this monstrous apparition.

It comes upon me :—Art thou anything ?

Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,

That mak'st my blood cold, and my hair to stare ?

Speak to me what thou art.

"*Ghost.* Thy evil spirit, Brutus."

There is another passage in "Macbeth" which has given the commentators considerable trouble, which has proved, in fact, an insoluble problem, where the right interpretation of a single verb removes all difficulty. It is the speech of Lennox referring to the rumour Macbeth diligently circulated that Duncan had been murdered by his sons :—

" Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and Donalbain
To kill their gracious father ? "

Mr. Dyce's note on this is : " The sense requires, Who can want the thought, etc. Yet I believe the text is not corrupt. Shakespeare is sometimes incorrect in these minutiae." Malone's is " Who cannot but think ? " Collier—Mr. Knightley (*Notes and Queries* for August 15, 1863, p. 122)—proposes to read, " We cannot," etc., putting a period instead of an interrogation point at the end of the sentence. Mr. Staunton simply points out the difficulty with Malone's attempted explanation of it. Mr. Grant White, who in his *Shakespeare Scholar* has discussed the passage at considerable length, proposes to get over the difficulty as follows : " May we not remove the point after the last ' late ' and read thus, making the passage declarative instead of interrogative ?—

' The right valiant Banquo walked too late ;
Whom you may say, if't please you, Fleance killed ;
For Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late
Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father.' "

That is, men, who will think that the alleged murder of Duncan by his sons is a crime too monstrous for

belief, must be careful not to walk too late. But no alteration whatever is needed. The passage as it stands is perfectly good sense and perfectly good English of Shakespeare's day, as it still remains perfectly good Northern English or Lowland Scotch of our own day. In these dialects the verb *want*, especially when construed with negative particles, has precisely the meaning which the critics insist the sense requires. If a farmer in the North of England or the Scotch Lowlands sent to borrow a neighbour's horse and received a negative reply, it would probably be conveyed in some such form as "he says he cannot want the horse to-day," *i.e.*, he cannot do without the horse; he must have the horse for his own use. In the same way if an Edinburgh porter said to his comrade, "I'll no want a gill of whisky the morn," he would express in a strong form his determination to have one. This use of the verb was not uncommon amongst English writers in Shakespeare's day. Thus in the *Country Farm*, a work translated from the French and published in 1600, we have in reference to a section insisting on the necessity of a country householder or farmer being practically acquainted with agricultural work—"Ploughing, an art that a householder cannot *want*". And Markham, speaking of the herb *purslane*, says: "They are apt to shed their seed, whence it comes that a ground once possessed by them will seldom *want* them". Many words and phrases now peculiar to the Scotch Lowlands were common to both countries in Shakespeare's day, and every one of the so-called Scotticisms to be found in his dramas is used by contemporary English writers. As a mere English writer, therefore, Shakespeare was entitled to use this verb in what is now the

Northern signification of it; and he appears to have done so in other passages besides the present one. Though used in literature it might, however, then as now be characteristic of the North, where alone it has survived, and it would thus naturally find a place in "Macbeth," the only one of Shakespeare's plays founded on a Scotch subject, and which contains other Scotticisms, such as *loon* for example. This meaning gives to the passage exactly the sense required, and ought therefore to be discriminated under the verb *want* in a Shakespearian glossary.

Again, there is a much controverted passage in "Troilus and Cressida," where, as it seems to us, the difficulty may be considerably relieved by assigning to a single word a sense it habitually had in Shakespeare's day, but of the very existence of which neither the critics nor the lexicographers seem to be in the least aware. It is the speech of Calchas asking a reward from the Grecian chiefs for his sacrifice on their behalf:—

"*Cal.* Now, princes, for the service I have done you,
The advantage of the time prompts me aloud
To call for recompense. Appear it to your mind,
That, through the *sight* I bear in things to Jove,
I have abandon'd Troy, left my possession,
Incurr'd a traitor's name; exposed myself,
From certain and possess'd conveniences,
To doubtful fortunes; sequest'ring from me all
That time, acquaintance, custom, and condition,
Made tame and most familiar to my nature;
And here, to do you service, am become
As new into the world, strange, unacquainted;
I do beseech you, as in way of taste,
To give me now a little benefit,
Out of those many register'd in promise,
Which you say live to come in my behalf."

With regard to the fourth line, where the difficulty chiefly lies, there is a real ambiguity in the folio, as it is impossible to say whether the reading is "in things to love," or "in things to Jove," but the sense decides in favour of the latter reading, which Mr. Dyce adopts. The main difficulty is one of interpretation. Taking *sight* in the sense of *foresight*, Calchas seems to say that through his certain knowledge the Greeks would prove victorious he had deserted the Trojans, and deserved special recompense for his timely ratting. Some shadow of this difficulty will probably attach to any explanation of the passage that may be given. But it is certainly softened by taking *sight* not in the usual and special sense of prescience, but in the general sense of acquaintance, skill, technical knowledge, professional conversancy, a meaning by no means unusual in Shakespeare's day. Both the noun *sight* and the verb *see* were constantly used to express professional skill and proficiency, the verb by Shakespeare himself in the "Taming of the Shrew":—

" Now shall my friend Petruchio do me grace ;
And offer me, disguised in sober robes,
To old Baptista as a schoolmaster
Well *seen* in music, to instruct Bianca ".

A dozen examples both of verb and noun might easily be given from contemporary authors with whose writings Shakespeare was familiar ; but a few examples of the noun, as it is unnoticed by our best lexicographers, must suffice. In a popular manual of conversation and polite behaviour, which from internal evidence Shakespeare must have well known, we have, with regard to the quality and accomplishments of a gentlewoman, the question " what the many things be she ought to have

a *sight* in"; and after recounting in detail the accomplishments of a gentleman, "neither is it possible for him that must have a *sight* in so many things to be very young". In another work of the same character, referring to the qualifications of a prince, and the necessity of his having a general knowledge of many things, we have: "That is a most commendable course for a prince to take, whom perchance it better becometh to have superficial *sight* in divers languages and sciences, than to be *deeply seen* in one only". Udal again, in illustrating the point that general directions ought not to be carried to extremes, says: "As for example, if one being advertised that it is a thing not unprofitable to take a taste and have a little *sight* in logic, do bestow all the days of his life on that study". Again: "Philip, when it was come to his ear that his son Alexander had in a certain place showed himself to be a cunning musician, graciously and courteously chid him for it, saying, 'Art thou not ashamed of thyself to have so good *sight* in music?' signifying that other arts than music were more meet and seemly for a king". Taking *sight* in this sense, the speech of Calchas would mean, "through the general skill I have in things pertaining to Jove, in the exercise of my higher functions, in my character as a priest, I have left Troy, abandoned my house, possessions, and friends, and cast in my lot with you, to do you what service I can". The higher powers of Olympus were notoriously divided in their sympathies with the rival combatants; but Calchas as their priest and representative had decided on the whole to join the Greeks even at considerable self-sacrifice. With this explanation, the construction, though still harsh, is not harsher than many to be found in Shake-

speare, and it yields, we think, a much better meaning than the common interpretation.

Amongst other omissions, Mr. Dyce has overlooked the verb *cheapen*, used by Benedick in "Much Ado about Nothing". While including in his glossary a number of words whose meaning is perfectly well known and obvious—such as *dou*, to put on; *doff*, to put off; *tell*, to count; *inherit*, to possess; *kindle*, to incite; *impawn*, to pawn or pledge; and a multitude of others used by Shakespeare in the sense they still bear, Mr. Dyce ought surely to have noticed the verb to *cheapen*, which, in Shakespeare's sense, is now virtually obsolete; or if still occasionally used in its older sense by a modern writer, the meaning can only be gathered from the context by the majority of ordinary readers. To cheapen at present means to reduce in value, to make cheap. But in Shakespeare's day, and indeed down to a recent period, it meant, as it still does provincially, to look at or examine a thing with a view to buying it; to inquire the price, think of purchasing, attempt to purchase or bargain for. This is the sense in which it is used by Benedick in his soliloquy against love and lovers:—

"May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair; yet I am well: another is wise; yet I am well: another virtuous; yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never *cheapen* her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God."

Benedick's meaning of course is that the lady must be virtuous, or he will not think of her—will not make any inquiries about her, become a suitor for her hand, or attempt in any way to try his chances of success as a lover. The word was used in the same sense down at least to the middle of the last century, as the following extract from a letter in the *Rambler*, on the changes produced by loss of fortune, will show: "I have always thought the clamours of women unreasonable, who imagine themselves injured because the men who followed them upon the supposition of a greater fortune, reject them when they are discovered to have less. I have never known any lady who did not think wealth a title to stipulations in her favour, and surely what is claimed by the possession of money is justly forfeited by its loss. She that has once demanded a settlement has allowed the importance of fortune; and when she cannot show pecuniary merit, why should she think her *cheapener* obliged to purchase?"

We may next give some examples of words noticed by Mr. Dyce, but of which his explanations are either imperfect or altogether erroneous. The first, from "Lear," is one of the most delicate, significant, and original compound epithets to be found in Shakespeare. The poor old king, after having been dismissed with a frown by Goneril, comes, in hope of comfort, sympathy, and tender care, to Regan, and in reply to her exclamation at his vehement curses of Goneril that in his rash moods he would curse her as well, says:—

"No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse :
Thy *tender-hefted* nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness : her eyes are fierce ; but thine
Do comfort, and not burn. 'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,

To bandy hasty words, to scant my sises,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in : thou better knowst
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude."

Nothing could more pathetically express the clinging, passionate desire of the old man for loving reverential tendance than the epithet *tender-hefted*. The sympathetic nature, the tenderness of heart, he yearned for and hoped to find, is expressed in a homely sensuous image founded on the universally accepted law that mind and body harmonise, that the delicate soul is delicately housed, and the finer organisation the index of the gentler mind. *Heft* is a well-known older English word for handle, that which holds or contains, and tender-hefted is simply delicately-housed, daintily-bodied, finely-sheathed. *Heft* was in this way applied proverbially to the body, and Howel has a phrase quoted by Halliwell, which is a good example of its graphic use—"loose in the heft," to designate an ill habit of body, a person of dissipated ways. In this case, instead of upholding the body and guiding it with a firm hand, the mind abandons all control and allows it to become the instrument of sensual gratification, and sink into a slack and rickety condition. Shakespeare's compound is quite in harmony with this popular use of the word *heft*, as well as with current notions of the relation between mind and body, and their radical harmony of nature and function. In the work already quoted from as belonging to Shakespeare's library, one of the interlocutors in the dialogue says: "Do you not know that this principle is held in philosophy, Whoso is tender of flesh is apt of mind? There-

fore, there is no doubt, that women being tenderer of flesh are also apter of mind, and of a more inclined wit to musings and speculations than men." *Tender-hefted* is therefore simply tender-bodied, delicately-organised, or, more literally, finely-fleshed. But Mr. Dyce, in common with his predecessors, is ignorant of this meaning. He follows the ruck of commentators in adopting Stevens's far-fetched conjecture: "Hefted seems to mean the same as heaved. Tender-hefted, *i.e.*, whose bosom is agitated by tender passions."

The words in Mr. Dyce's glossary of which the explanation is imperfect are naturally more numerous than those whose explanations are altogether erroneous. From a number of insufficient and unsatisfactory explanations that might be instanced, we may select as illustrations of the class the words *besonian*, *balk*, *lurch*, *hilding*, and *zany*. On *besonian* Mr. Dyce has a long and learned dissertation, tracing the origin and use of the term in Italian and Spanish, but after all he makes hardly any approach to the special meaning of the word as used by Shakespeare. The meanings that Mr. Dyce gives are in order, a beggar, a raw or needy soldier, and more generally a knave or scoundrel; but the drift of the explanation as a whole is to fix attention on the second meaning, that of a needy and disbanded soldier, as the central conception of the word. He quotes with approval from Mr. Bolton Corney an account of the history and etymology of *besonian* supporting this view. Mr. Corney and his authorities are evidently altogether wrong as to the etymology of the word. But however this may be, both Mr. Dyce and Mr. Corney insist on giving the word a sense the very opposite of that in which it is commonly used by Shakespeare and his

contemporaries. Instead of designating a soldier by the term *besonian* the Elizabethan writers generally use it for a peasant, a rustic, for the low-born and rudely-nurtured as sharply contrasted with the gentle and noble—with all that is cultured, spirited, and generous, and especially with the conditions of courtly and military life. It denotes essentially the clown or churl as opposed to the noble, the courtier, and the soldier. Thus to take the more distinctive of the two instances in which Shakespeare uses the term—the scene in which the swaggering Pistol suddenly appears at Justice Shallow's gate, big with the glorious news that Henry IV. was dead and Prince Hal king:—

"*Davy*. If it please your worship, there's one Pistol come from the court with news.

"*Fal*. From the court? let him come in.

Enter PISTOL.

How now, Pistol?

"*Pist*. Sir John! save you, sir.

"*Fal*. What wind blew you hither, Pistol?

"*Pist*. Not the ill wind which blows none to good.—Sweet knight, thou art now one of the greatest men in the realm.

Sir John, I am thy Pistol, and thy friend,
And helter-skelter have I rode to thee;
And tidings do I bring, and lucky joys,
And golden times, and happy news of price.

"*Fal*. I prithee now, deliver them like a man of this world.

"*Pist*. A foutra for the world, and worldlings base!

I speak of Africa and golden joys.

"*Fal*. O base Assyrian knight, what is thy news?

Let King Cophetua know the truth thereof.

"*Sil*. [*Sings*.]

And Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John.

"*Pist*. Shall dunghill curs confront the Helicons?

And shall good news be baffled ?

Then, Pistol, lay thy head in Furies' lap.

" *Shal.* Honest gentleman, I know not your breeding.

" *Pist.* Why, then, lament, therefore.

" *Shal.* Give me pardon, sir ;—If, sir, you come with news from the court, I take it there is but two ways : either to utter them, or to conceal them. I am, sir, under the king, in some authority.

" *Pist.* Under which king, *besonian* ? speak or die.

" *Shal.* Under King Harry.

" *Pist.* Harry the fourth ? or fifth ?

" *Shal.* Harry the fourth.

" *Pist.* A foutra for thine office !—

Sir John, thy tender lambkin now is king ;

Harry the fifth's the man. I speak the truth."

Here the term *besonian* is obviously used by Pistol to emphasise Shallow's rustic ignorance, to contrast the humdrum country justice plunged in provincial obscurity, and vegetating on his paternal acres, with the dashing big-worded marshalist fresh from town, with the latest intelligence from the court. Clearly none of the meanings to which Mr. Dyce gives prominence suit the context. Pistol could not mean to suggest that Shallow was either a beggar, a needy soldier, a knave, or a scoundrel. He uses *besonian* simply as a thrasonical phrase of martial contempt for the bucolic mind, an intimation that Shallow, justice of the peace though he may be, and "under the king in some authority," is after all no better than a peasant. The word is used by Nash, and other contemporary poets and dramatists, in exactly the same sense, to designate the lower class of labourers, boors and rustics. And Markham, a contemporary writer, and a good authority on such a question, gives peasant as the generic meaning of the word. At the outset of his work on the "English Husbandmen," he says: "First, there-

fore, let every man understand, that this title of Husbandman is not tyed onely to the ordinarie tillers of the earth, such as we cal husbandmen; in France, peasants; in Spaine, *Besonyans*, and generall the cloutshoo: no they are creatures of a better creation, for as Adam was the first husbandman, so all the sonnes of Adam (even from the crown to the collage; how excellent so ever if they be excellent indeed) cannot assume a greater, a better, or richer title, than to be a good husband." As an habitual designation of the lowest class of churls and labourers, the term no doubt carried with it a shade of contemptuous meaning, and it was at times not unnaturally applied to those who were low in character as well as those who were low in social position, the abandoned and the criminal, the idler, the thief, and the vagabond, as well as to the hind and the clown. This meaning attaches to the second case in which Shakespeare uses the word, where Suffolk, on the eve of his violent death, says that noble, brave, and illustrious men have often met their death at the hands of the base-born, the ill-conditioned, and the obscure, the term *besonian* being applied to these classes. The primitive meaning of the term, however, is that of peasant, and it is etymologically (*besoin*, *bisogno*) connected with the hard condition, the chronic poverty and oppression of the agricultural labourer's lot in every country of Europe. That the term should have been applied to raw and needy recruits hastily pressed into the ranks in time of war and as hastily disbanded is natural enough, since having little opportunity for regular training they would be little better than peasants and rustics in spite of their martial uniform and name.

Mr. Dyce can hardly be blamed for not having ex-

plained the verb *balk* in the peculiar phrase "balk logic," which has perplexed the commentators so much in the "Taming of the Shrew". He could scarcely have succeeded in such an attempt without devoting more attention to the inquiry than can well be given to single words in the compilation of a voluminous glossary. The verb *balk* is one of the great difficulties of Shakespearian critics, and it has not hitherto, so far as we are aware, received the smallest elucidation beyond a vague and unsupported conjecture as to its probable meaning. Mr. Dyce in fact sums up the net result of all previous criticism in the brief entry: "*Balk logic*, according to some, chop logic, wrangle logically; according to others, give the go-by to logic". The phrase occurs in the beginning of the play, in the dialogue between Lucentio and Tranio, where the young student, having newly arrived at Padua to pursue "a course of learning and ingenious studies," asks his servant Tranio to tell him his mind on the subject:—

"*Tra. Mi perdonate*, gentle master mine,
 I am in all affected as yourself;
 Glad that you thus continue your resolve,
 To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
 Only, good master, while we do admire
 This virtue, and this moral discipline,
 Let's be no stoics, nor no stocks, I pray:
 Or so devote to Aristotle's checks,
 As Ovid be an outcast quite abjur'd:
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,
 And practise rhetoric in your common talk:
 Music and poesy use to quicken you;
 The mathematics, and the metaphysics,
 Fall to them, as you find your stomach serves you:
 No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en;—
 In brief, sir, study what you most affect."

This phrase "balk logic" has so puzzled the editors that several even of the most critical, being unable to assign any appropriate sense to the verb, have proposed various conjectural emendations, such as *talk*, *hack*, *chop*. But the ordinary text is undoubtedly correct. No change whatever is needed, as Shakespeare simply uses a well-established English verb in its primitive, literal, and appropriate sense. The primary meaning of the noun *balk* is separation, from Anglo-Saxon *balca*, a division ridge or furrow, rafter or beam. The word was habitually used in this general sense in Shakespeare's day. In North's *Plutarch* it is said of Solon for example: "He glorieth and breaketh forth in his verses that he had taken away all *bawkes* and marks that separated men's lands through the county of Attica, and that now he had set at liberty that which before was in bondage". Again, in the *Book of Homilies* we have, "marks which of ancient time were laid for the division of meres, and *balks* in the fields to bring the owners to their right". In Golding's *Ovid* the term is applied in a similar sense to the Isthmus of Corinth:—

"And now was Thesey pressed,
 Unknowne unto his father yet, who by his knightly force
 Had set from robbers cleare the *balke* that makes the streight
 divorce
 Betweene the seas Ionian and Aegean".

And Cotgrave, following the earlier definition of Palsgrave, gives *separaison* "a balk or division between two lands". In early times land would usually be divided either by a ditch or mound, either by a dyke or dividing line cut below the surface, or by a ridge heaped above it, and *balk* accordingly was used to designate

both kinds of division; just as *dyke* is still used in different senses in different parts of the country—in the midland and southern counties of England for a dividing trench or gutter, while in the north it is applied to any kind of boundary or enclosure, including hedges and stone walls, “stone dykes,” as they are called, being common in almost every part of Scotland. Thus Barret, after describing *balk* as a “ridge of land between two furrows, a bank of earth raised or standing up,” gives as the French equivalent *un seillon*, which Cotgrave interprets “a ridge or a high furrow, also the gutter or hollow furrow made by the plough in turning it up”. In this way *balk* is sometimes used by early writers for the deep rut made by a cart-wheel in passing through miry ways. More usually, however, it denotes the ridge of earth between two furrows. In this sense it is used by Chaucer and Langland, by Spenser and the Elizabethan writers, by descriptive poets of a later date down to a comparatively recent period, and it still exists provincially over a considerable area. Again, in large open fields held by different proprietors *balk* was very naturally applied to the broad strip of sward left in ploughing to divide the separate holdings. On coming to these green *balks*, as they were sometimes called, the plough instead of going straight on would have to turn aside, or be lifted over them, and hence the secondary meaning of *balk*, both noun and verb, as a check or obstacle, something that arrests your course and makes you swerve aside. This secondary signification would, however, in any case, naturally follow from the primitive meaning of the word.

Again, in houses, especially in early times, when they were mainly built of wood, beams and rafters

would constitute the chief divisions, and they are accordingly called *balks*. Thus Fletcher, in the "Purple Island," says :—

" This third the merry Diazome we call,
A border city these two coasts removing,
Which like a *balk* with his cross-built wall
Disparts the terms of anger and of loving ".

In cottages, and also in farm-houses, the lower rooms were frequently not ceiled, and the *balks*, or open beams, were extensively used as cupboards by means of shelves and pegs. And even when ceiled the larger *balks*, or separating beams, were allowed to project below the ceiling for purposes both of strength and convenience. Numerous references to *balk* in this sense occur in our early writers, and indeed in almost every period of our literature. From never having seized the radical meaning of the word, our lexicographers are, however, all at sea with regard to the two meanings of *balk* as a ridge or furrow, and as a rafter or beam. For the most part they regard them as distinct words, place them under separate heads, and refer them to different roots. In a few cases they attempt to derive the one from the other, and these attempts are sometimes amusing enough. Mr. Wedgewood, after Junius, says, for example : " From the resemblance in shape of a *balk* in a ploughed field the term is applied to a hewn beam ". He might almost as pertinently have said from its resemblance to a gutter or broad path of green sward, for as we have seen *balk* applies to these as well as to a ridge. The truth is of course that in both cases the word is exactly the same, and carries with it the same notion, expressing respectively a common purpose or end in different and widely dissimilar objects.

From the noun comes the verb to *balk*, to divide, to separate into ridges and furrows. Minshew gives the verb in a sense of making ridges or divisions in the ploughing of land, and in a secondary application it would be used generally for raising into moulds or heaps, as by Shakespeare himself in the first part of "Henry IV.". Halliwell again gives an example of the verb employed in its generic and primitive meaning, "balk the way," as equivalent to divide the crowd, make a path or lane, in a word, clear or open the road. *Balk* logic is therefore exactly equivalent to chop logic, meaning divide, separate, distinguish with your companions in a logical manner, according to the forms and rules of logic. Both words, chop and balk, signalise the processes of definition and division, of sharp analytic distinction, in which the essence of logic consists, and the mental value of which is represented in the saying of Socrates, that if he could find a man able skilfully to divide he would follow his steps and admire him as a god. It may be noted that Spenser uses the verb *balk* twice at least in a sense similar to that of Shakespeare, and the passages in which it occurs have naturally proved a source of considerable trouble and perplexity to the editors. Todd gets over the difficulty by stigmatising the meanings as arbitrary, while other critics attempt to explain them away. It need scarcely be said, however, that there is no real difficulty in the passages, their meaning being clear enough, when the primitive and central signification of the verb is understood.

The verb *lurch* in the peculiar sense it bears in "Coriolanus" is not of very common occurrence, and well deserves a little special illustration. Mr. Dyce,

however, simply quotes from Malone a short account of its meaning and use which seems to us both imperfect and erroneous. The verb occurs in the speech of Cominius in the Capitol, celebrating the valiant deeds of Coriolanus :—

“ He prov'd best man i' the field, and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea ;
And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
He *lurch'd* all swords o' the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioli, let me say
I cannot speak him home : He stopp'd the fliers ;
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport : as weeds before
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
And fell below his stem.”

Here Malone, after giving from Cotgrave an example of *lurch* in the sense of purloin, adds, “ But in Shakespeare's time to *lurch* meant to win a maiden set at cards,” and he accordingly interprets Shakespeare's employment of the word in the light of this usage, Mr. Dyce approving of the interpretation. But although the noun is found in this technical sense in most European languages, there is no proof that the word existed in English, nor, if it did, would it suit the context. Shakespeare evidently uses the English verb *lurch*, literally to devour eagerly, “ ravin up,” gulp down, and in the secondary sense to seize violently upon, rob, engross, absorb. Both noun and verb were in use among the Elizabethan writers in the sense of seizure, robbery, and it is the more important to illustrate this meaning as the noun is wholly unknown to our lexicographers. An example of its use occurs, however, in the poems prefixed to “ Coryat's Crudities,” where one of the

author's friends commemorates his achievements abroad, and amongst others the robbery of a waxen image from the Virgin's shrine in a church at Brixia.

" Briefly for trial of a religious *lurch*
Thou nimbd'st an image out of Brixia's church."

Again, the verb is used more than once, in precisely the same sense, by Warner; and an example or two will sufficiently bring out its special meaning. In reference to the rage of the vulgar wealthy for titles and territorial distinction, he says:—

" Hence citizens with courtiers do so wayne-it for the time,
That with their paper ladders they even stately castles climb,
Then proudly prick the mounted sirs, the heralds are to blame,
Will they, nill they, urging fees to gentlilise their name.
Hence country louts *land-lurch* their lords, and courtiers prize the
same."

And again, referring to the grasping ambition of Spain as the nominal champion of the Romish Church:—

" For these, elsewhere, and ever Spayne when Spayne would
sceptres *lurch*,
Concludes for Spayne, though ever Spayne begins for Holy
Church".

In the sense of engrossing, of seizing and carrying off with a high hand, *lurch* is also used amongst others by Bacon and Milton. To *lurch* all swords of the garland, means therefore not only to rob all swords of the garland, but to carry it away from them with an easy and victorious swoop.

Mr. Dyce throws no fresh light on the word *hilding* left by his predecessors in a state of the most uncritical vagueness and obscurity. In dealing with it indeed he falls into much the same kind of mistake as in dealing with *besonian*. As *besonian* is described generally a knave,

a scoundrel, so the whole explanation of *hilding* is "a low degenerate wretch, a term applied to both sexes". This, though brief and extreme enough, is in the highest degree unsatisfactory, giving no explanation of the word that might not be hastily gathered from the context by the most careless reader. Instead of a picture of the word's real meaning it is a blot or blur, at most a *silhouette*, the rude and darkened outline of the word's worst meaning without any of its characteristic features or expression. The term is in common use with the Elizabethan writers, and it is no doubt employed with considerable latitude of meaning. But it has nevertheless two leading significations which are closely connected with each other and with the root. *Hilding* comes from the Saxon *healdan*, semi-Saxon *haelden*, to hold, keep, rule, thus meaning originally one who is held or kept, like *hireling* from hire, *starveling* from starve, and many others, the earlier form of the word being *hilderling* or *hilding*. The central idea of the word is thus one of subjection, the *hilding* being essentially one in a state of servitude, a thrall or slave, and this explains the emphasis of degradation and contempt attached to the word. But as there are two contrasted forms or conditions of servitude, so there are two kinds of *hildings*. The *hilding* may be a rustic or a menial, may as a dependant subserve the pleasures and minister to the personal gratification, or be engaged on the estate of the superior, may be, that is, in Shakespeare's language, a "hilding for a livery" or a hind, a churl,—

"Some *hilding* fellow that had stole

The horse he rode on".

The *hilding* may thus lead a life of more or less profligate, insolent and pampered idleness, or pass his days in

an abject slough of extreme and hopeless toil. As Mr. Dyce says, the term is used of both sexes, but it is in the former sense that it is commonly applied to women, thus carrying with it a sense not only of degradation but disgrace. An illustration of its use in this sense occurs in Mercutio's jesting at Romeo's love-sickness:—

“ Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flow'd in ; Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen-wench ; marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her ; Dido, a dowdy ; Cleopatra, a gipsy ; Helen and Hero, *hildings* and harlots ; Thisbe, a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose ”.

And further on in the play old Capulet in his rage at Juliet's obstinacy applies the opprobrious term to her. Again, in the “ Two Noble Kinsmen,” the word is applied in angry depreciation to a proud village maiden who flaunted abroad dressed more gaily than her companions, and had virtually disdained them by failing to appear at a rustic gathering. The word was used in the same sense for at least a century later. In Rowe's tragedy of “ Jane Shore,” Gloster at the close of an interview with the unhappy woman, in which he applies other and coarser epithets to her position and past way of life, says to Ratcliff:—

“ This idle toy, this *hilding*, scorns my power
And sets us all at nought ”.

When applied to men, on the other hand, it usually emphasises the sordid characteristics and degrading associations connected with the servile state. As everything generous, spirited, and noble is identified with freedom, so all that is abject, mean, and base is associated with slavery. The term *hilding* thus sharply contrasts the churl and churlish ways with the opposite state of gentle-birth training and way of life. The

term, moreover, not unfrequently expresses low moral qualities as well as hard material conditions. The servile state naturally tends to produce brutish manners, and the slavish mind, and becomes associated with them. In this way we reach Mr. Dyce's solitary description, a "low degenerate wretch". A serf or rustic slave is thus stigmatised as base, perfidious, cowardly, cold-blooded, and the like. This natural association of qualities is seen in Hamlet's celebrated soliloquy, beginning—

• "O! what a rogue and peasant slave am I,"

as well as in a number of other passages. The term *hilding* is in fact a compendious embodiment of all that is contained in Hamlet's epithets of self-reproach. The word was not only applied to men but to domestic animals, especially to horses, as, from the different conditions of blood and training, they are almost as sharply contrasted as their owners. The sleek and high-mettled barb, the swift and fiery courser, differ as widely from the overwrought drudge of the glebe and mill as the noble from the peasant. The term *hilding* is also applied to animals left to run at large for a time, to colts unbroken and steers not yet fit for the yoke. In this case the idle life and coarse conditions of the animal, his want of care and tendance, training, and regular occupation, explain and justify the application of the term.

Mr. Dyce's explanation of *zany* is "a buffoon, a merry-andrew, a mimic". This, while true as far as it goes, is, like many of his descriptions, so vague and general as to miss altogether the distinctive meaning of an expressive word used habitually in a precise and

technical sense by some of our greatest writers, especially of the Elizabethan age. But in this he is not singular. In spite of all that has been written by the commentators on Shakespeare's fools and clowns, including Mr. Douce's special dissertation on the subject, no critic has yet explained what *zany* really means, or pointed out the special relevancy of Shakespeare's allusions to the character. The *zany* in Shakespeare's day was not so much a buffoon and mimic as the obsequious follower of a buffoon, and the attenuated mime of a mimic. He was the vice, servant, or attendant of the professional clown or fool, who, dressed like his master, accompanied him on the stage or in the ring, following his movements, attempting to imitate his tricks, and adding to the general merriment by his ludicrous failures and comic imbecility. It is this characteristic not merely of mimicry, but of weak and abortive mimicry, that gives its distinctive meaning to the word, and colours it with a special tinge of contempt. The professional clown or fool might be clever and accomplished in his business, a skilful tumbler and mountebank, doing what he undertook to do thoroughly and well. But this was never the case with the *zany*. He was always slight and thin, well-meaning, but comparatively helpless, full of readiness, grimace, and alacrity, but also of incompetence, eagerly trying to imitate his superior, but ending in failure and absurdity. This feature of the early stage has descended to our own times, and may still occasionally be found in all its vigour in the performances of the circus. We have ourselves seen the clown and the *zany* in the ring together, the clown doing clever tricks, the *zany* provoking immense laughter by his ludicrous failures in

attempting to imitate them. Where there is only a single clown, he often combines both characters, doing skilful tumbling on his own account, and playing the zany to the riders.

The Elizabethan dramatists usually refer to the *zany* in connection with the clown or fool as Shakespeare himself does. In "Twelfth Night," Malvolio, the real fool, envious of the notice the domestic clown attracted, says that he regards those wise men who delight in and encourage fools, as "no better than the fool's zanies," that is no better than their foils and vices, their imbecile admirers and imitators. From the apish vanity, officiousness, and imbecility attaching to the character of the zany the term is often applied in a secondary, and metaphoric sense to the whole tribe of superserviceable triflers, parasites, and fribblers that infest society, and seek to attach themselves to the wealthy and the great by affecting their tastes and ministering to their less worthy amusements. Thus Biron in "Love's Labour's Lost," when their plan is discovered and frustrated, says:—

"I see the trick on't:—Here was a consent,
Knowing aforehand of our merriment,
To dash it like a Christmas comedy:
Some carry-tale, some please-man, some *slight zany*,
Some mumble-news, some trencher-knight, some Dick,—
That smiles his cheek in years; and knows the trick
To make my lady laugh, when she's dispos'd—
Told our intents before".

And Ben Jonson, in "Every Man out of his Humour," draws an elaborate picture of the social zany:—

"*Maci*. Alas, the poor fantastic! he's scarce known
To my lady there; and those that know him,
Know him the simplest man of all they know;

Deride and play upon his amorous humours,
 Though he but apishly doth imitate
 The gallant'st courtiers, kissing ladies' pumps,
 Holding the cloth for them, praising their wits,
 And servilely observing every one
 May do them pleasure ; fearful to be seen
 With any man, though he be ne'er so worthy,
 That's not in grace with some that are the greatest.
 Thus courtiers do, and these he counterfeits ;
 But sets no such a sightly carriage
 Upon their vanities, as they themselves ;
 And therefore they despise him : for indeed
 He's like the *zany* to a tumbler,
 That tries tricks after him, to make men laugh."

Often, however, the term *zany* is used by itself without any direct reference to the clown or fool. But in these cases it still retains its distinctive meaning, carrying with it the notion not only of mimicry, but of apish and abortive mimicry. This usage both of noun and verb might be easily illustrated from the literature of at least two centuries, from Milton, Dryden, and their contemporaries, as well as from the pages of the Elizabethan poets and prose writers.

These examples might easily be multiplied. In going through Mr. Dyce's glossary we have marked a considerable number of imperfect explanations, and some few defective references. But any notice of these must be left for the present, our space being already exhausted. Some sections of the glossary are moreover altogether weak, such as the explanation of Shakespeare's references to plants and flowers. But for these Mr. Dyce relies for the most part on Mr. Beisly, who has written a special work on the subject, but who, judging from the extracts, cannot be a very safe guide.

Mr. Dyce also carries to some excess the questionable plan of illustrating the meaning of important archaic words from later dictionaries instead of from the literature of the time. Apart from these slight drawbacks, the glossary as a whole is exceedingly well executed, and will prove most useful to students of Shakespeare. Good as it is, however, what we have said will serve to show that something better may still be produced. Notwithstanding the prolonged and industrious labours of the critics in the wide field of Shakespearian literature, there is still a scantling of valuable grain for gleaners following in the wake of the early reapers who have gathered in the main harvest.

NEW SHAKESPEARIAN INTERPRETATIONS.¹

MR. GLADSTONE, in his "Essay on the Place of Homer in Education," notices the tradition of a certain Dorotheus, who spent the whole of his life in endeavouring to elucidate the meaning of a single word in Homer, and seems to suggest that the time thus occupied was not altogether wasted. Without going quite so far as this, most critics will probably agree in his general conclusion, "that no exertion spent upon any of the great classics of the world, and attended with any amount of real result, is thrown away". Unfortunately, the greatest classic in the literatures of the world affords as much scope for this kind of labour as any of his reputed peers, not excepting the object of Mr. Gladstone's critical devotion. The oldest and most authoritative editions of Shakespeare are, it is well known, crowded with verbal errors, textual corruptions, and metrical obscurities. They include, indeed, almost every species of literary and typographical confusion which haste, ignorance, and carelessness in the multiplication and fortuitous printing of manuscript copies could produce. After a century and a half of critical labour embracing three great schools of editors and

¹ *Shakespeare: The First Collected Edition of the Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare.* A Reproduction in Exact Fac-Simile of the Famous First Folio, 1623, by the newly discovered Process of Photo-Lithography. Under the superintendence of H. Staunton. London, 1866.

Edinburgh Review, Oct., 1872.

commentators, the text of these dramas is only now partially purged from the obvious blots and stains that disfigure the earliest editions. And it is only within the last ten years that the results of this prolonged critical labour have been condensed, and exhibited in a thoroughly scientific shape, by the acute and learned editors of the Cambridge *Shakespeare*.

By means of this most useful and scholarlike edition, any cultivated and intelligent reader may form some estimate of the net result and general value of Shakespearian criticism. A comparison of the best modern readings with those of the Quartos and Folios will show in what numberless instances the text has been corrected, amended, and even restored. Those who have never made such a comparison would be surprised to find how many familiar phrases and passages, some too regarded as peculiarly Shakespearian, are due to the happy conjectures of successive textual scholars. Rowe and Pope, the first critical editors, being themselves poets, are peculiarly felicitous in their suggested emendations. But even the more prosaic Theobald's single-minded and persistent devotion was surprisingly successful in the same direction. His labours were, however, still more fruitful in restoring neglected readings from the First Folio which neither of his predecessors had consulted with any care. The first school of critics, indeed, brought native sagacity rather than minute or accurate learning to the task of clearing up the difficulties of Shakespeare's text. They satisfied themselves with correcting the more obvious misprints of the Folios, and endeavouring to relieve, by conjectural emendations, some of their corruptest passages.

The second school of editors, represented by Capell,

Stevens, and Malone, were diligent students of the Elizabethan literature, and found no difficulty therefore in explaining many words and phrases that had perplexed and baffled their predecessors. For elucidating the obscurities of the text, they relied more on illustration than on conjectured emendation. Many passages which the early editors, through ignorance of Elizabethan manners, usages, and allusions, had regarded as corrupt, were amply vindicated from the charge by the more exact and minute knowledge of the later. The third, and more recent schools of editors and critics, represented by Knight and Collier, Dyce and Staunton, while combining the distinctive excellences of the previous schools, have specially developed what may be regarded as the most fruitful branch of Shakespearian criticism—that of apt and illuminating illustrations from contemporary literature. The researches of Knight, Dyce, and Staunton in particular have satisfactorily explained many phrases and allusions regarded by previous editors as hopelessly ambiguous and obscure, if not altogether unintelligible. While thus working in the right direction, the modern school has, however, exemplified afresh the conflict between authority and criticism which must always prevail with regard to an original text, at once so important and so defective as that of Shakespeare's dramas. Mr. Knight, in his admiration of the First Folio, yielded a somewhat exclusive deference to authority. Mr. Collier, again, partly no doubt from the accident of possessing the Perkin's Folio, went to the other extreme, becoming the champion of conjectural emendation in its most licentious forms. Mr. Dyce and Mr. Staunton hold the balance comparatively even, but in the hands of the

Cambridge editors it again inclines more decisively towards the side of authority. On the whole, the result of recent criticism and research has been to strengthen the position of the First Folio, and check the recurrent tendency to get rid of textual difficulties by ingenious, but often rash and ignorant, conjecture.

This result is in all respects a satisfactory one. Conjectural emendation is at best a double-edged instrument, to be wielded in safety only on rare occasions and by the most skilful hands. The eager Shakespearian student is, however, continually tempted to cut the Gordian knot of a difficulty by its summary use. The temptation should be steadfastly resisted, on pain, for the most part, of reading into the poet's lines a foreign and prosaic sense, instead of bringing fully out their real but latent meaning. In the majority of cases the practice of substituting his own language for the poet's simply depraves the text, and injures the finer sensibilities of the critic. Those who indulge in it too freely, however naturally gifted, soon lose that respect for the poet's words, and scrupulous care for his meaning, which is the foundation of all sound and illuminating criticism.

There is little danger of any excess in the other main department of critical labour, that of illustrating from appropriate sources the obscurer terms and allusions of Shakespeare's text. In this direction there is still ample scope, "room and verge enough," for the labours of Shakespearian students. The fact is in itself one of the most striking proofs of Shakespeare's marvellous universality. That anything should remain to be elucidated after the life-long devotion of so many learned and acute commentators is surprising enough.

But Shakespeare's vision of life is so wide, his moral insight so profound, his knowledge and sympathies so vitalised and universal, and his command of language so absolute, that every part in the wide circle of contemporary learning and experience may throw some light on his pages. In particular, his birthright of pregnant speech is so imperial that he seems to appropriate by a kind of royal prerogative the more expressive elements of diction in every department of human attainment and activity. No section of life or thought is too humble for his regard; none too lofty for his sympathetic appreciation. The day-spring of his serene and glorious intellect illuminates and vivifies the whole. The more prominent features of that great world are familiar to all cultivated English readers. The order and organisation of the several parts have been diligently studied and eloquently expounded by the critics. But there are still hidden nooks and obscure recesses which even the most curious and painstaking observers have failed to explore. On these, special investigation and persistent research may yet throw some light. Such researches are, moreover, within the reach of students who could hardly be considered Shakespearian scholars in the higher and technical sense of the term. The complete Shakespearian scholar ought to have a minute and exhaustive, but at the same time vital acquaintance with the whole Elizabethan period, its entire universe of knowledge and experience. This can only be gained by the thorough and prolonged study of its history and literature, including the most fugitive and evanescent productions, such as songs, ballads, and chap-books, squibs and letters, pamphlets and broadsides. Few

even of the more devoted Shakespearian critics have reached this ideal standard. Many hands, however, make light work, and much may be done in the way of Shakespearian interpretation by the separate contributions of students who have been able to cultivate only a small portion of the wide field. The humblest labourer may add his mite to the constantly-accumulating stores of sterling commentary and illustration.

Many of the sources whence elucidations of Shakespeare's obscure passages may be drawn lie on the surface, and are well known. His writings abound, for example, with terms and phrases, similes, metaphors, and allusions derived from field sports, such as hunting and hawking; from games of chance and skill, such as cards and dice, bowls and tennis; from the military and self-defensive arts, such as archery and fencing; from fashionable pastimes, such as music and dancing; and from popular natural history—the whole folk-flora and folk-fauna of the time. The more obvious, and many of the more obscure allusions connected with these branches of popular knowledge and practice, have been amply explained by successive editors. Some, however, have been overlooked, and in the present paper we purpose giving a few illustrations of these neglected allusions. We shall offer an explanation of some passages in Shakespeare, either given up by critics and commentators as hopelessly unintelligible, or only very imperfectly and erroneously explained. So far at least as we are acquainted with Shakespearian criticism, most of the explanations now proposed of obscure terms, phrases, and allusions are new,—have not been in any way anticipated by previous writers on the subject. Even a very partial acquaintance with the wide field of

Shakespearian criticism suggests, however, the propriety of some hesitation and reserve in announcing novelties of interpretation. Every persistent student of Shakespeare must have found, again and again, that what he at first imagined to be discoveries had been anticipated by previous writers, illustrious or obscure. In general, however, the best modern editions represent in a condensed form, either in notes or glossary, the main results of previous criticism. If they leave a difficulty unnoticed, or give only a vague and conjectural explanation, it may be assumed with tolerable certainty that no better solution has yet been offered. In the same way the Variorum edition gives the main results of Shakespearian criticism up to the date of its publication. In offering the following elucidations as novelties, it is meant therefore that they solve difficulties left unexplained by the Variorum edition, by modern editors, by the ablest independent critics, such as Douce, Hunter, Walker, and White, and, so far as the writer is aware, by all previous commentators on Shakespeare.

We may begin with a few illustrations from popular field sports, which in Shakespeare's day meant very much hawking and hunting. These furnish the poet with almost inexhaustible materials of imagery and allusion. In particular, the sportive warfare in the fields and woods with the nobler kinds of chase and game afforded the aptest phrases, similes, and metaphors for picturing vividly the sterner realities of martial conflict, "the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war". Such references occur again and again, and many of them are even now only partially explained. In "Coriolanus," for example, in the wonderful scene between the servants in the house of Aufidius, such an

allusion occurs. While the servants who had resisted the intruder are talking together in the hall about the sudden arrival and ceremonious entertainment of their master's great enemy, a third hastily approached from the banqueting-room with the news that it has been just determined, at the suggestion of Coriolanus, to march against Rome.

"*Sec. Serv.* Why, then we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

"*First Serv.* Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace as far as day does night; it's spritely, waking, audible, and *full of vent*. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy, mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men."

Here the phrase "full of vent," the reading of the Folios, has so perplexed the critics that more than one has proposed to substitute for it "full of vaunt". The Folio text is, however, perfectly accurate, and peculiarly expressive, although it has never yet been correctly explained. The only explanation attempted is that of Johnson, repeated by subsequent editors, that "full of vent" means "full of rumour, full of materials of discourse". This, however, is a mere conjecture, and not a happy one, as it altogether misses the distinctive meaning of the phrase. Vent is a technical term in hunting to express the scenting of the game by the hounds employed in the chase. Both noun and verb are habitually used in this sense. Their exact meaning and use will be made clear by an extract or two from Turbervile's translation of *Du Fouilloux*, the popular manual of hunting in Shakespeare's day. The first extract refers to the wiles and subtleties of the hart when keenly pressed

in the chase: "When a hart feelles that the hounds hold in after him, he fleeth and seeketh to beguile them with change in sundry sortes, for he will seeke other harts and deare at lare, and rowseth them before the houndes to make them hunt change; therewithall he will lie flat down upon his belly in some of their layres, and so let the houndes overshoot him, and because they should have no sent of him, nor *vent* him, he will trusse all his four feet under his belly, and will blow and breath upon the ground in some moist place, in such sort that I have seen the houndes passe by such an hart within a yard of him and never *vent* him". Further on, the author, speaking of the hart, says again expressly: "When he smelleth or *venteth* anything, we say he hath this or that in the wind". In the same way, when the hound vents anything, he pauses to verify the scent, and then, full of eager excitement, strains in the leash to be after the game that is thus perceived to be a-foot. The following extract from the rhyming report of a huntsman upon sight of a hart in pride of grease illustrates this:—

"Then if the Prince demand what head he beare,
I answer thus with sober words and cheare:
My Liege, I went this morning on my quest;
My hound did sticke, and seemd to *vent* some beast.
I held him short, and drawing after him,
I might behold the hart was feeding trym,
His head was high, and large in each degree,
Well palmed eke, and seemd full sound to be.
Of colour browne, he beareth eight and tenne,
Of stately height, and long he seemed then.
His beame seemd great, in good proportion led,
Well burred and round, well pearled neare his head,
He seemed fayre, tweene black and berrie brounde,
He seemes well fed, by all the signes I found."

The use of the noun is exemplified in another hunting rhyme, or huntsman's soliloquy, entitled "The Blazon of the Hart," which is of special interest from the vividness of the picture it brings before us :—

"I am the hunt, which rathe and early rise,
My bottell filled with wine in any wise,
Two draughts I drinke, to stay my steps withall,
For each foote one, because I would not fall.
Then take my hound, in liam me behind,
The stately hart in fryth or fell to find.
And while I seeke his slott where he hath fedde,
The sweet byrdes sing, to cheare my drowsie head.
And when my hound doth straine upon good *vent*
I must confesse, the same doth me content.
But when I have my coverts walkt about,
And harbred fast, the hart for comming out,
Then I returne, to make a grave report."

The technical meaning and use of the word in these passages is sufficiently clear, and it will be seen how happily Shakespeare employs it. To strain at the lyam or leash "upon good vent" is in Shakespeare's phrase to be "full of vent," or in other words keenly excited, full of pluck and courage, of throbbing energy and impetuous desire, in a word, full of all the kindling stir and commotion of anticipated conflict. This is not only in harmony with the meaning of the passage, but gives point and force to the whole description. War is naturally personified as a trained hound roused to animated motion by the scent of game, giving tongue, and straining in the slips at the near prospect of the exciting chase. This explanation justifies the reading of the Folios, "*sprightly walking*, audible, full of vent," or at least affords a better explanation of it than has yet been offered. With a single exception the early

reading has been rejected by all modern editors, including, strangely enough, Mr. Knight and the Cambridge editors. The exception is Mr. Staunton, who, however, while retaining the older reading, fails to understand it, and misinterprets the passage. He explains "sprightly walking" as "quick moving or marching," with evident reference to military movements, and with regard to the special phrase under review, he says boldly "vent is voice, utterance". But the previous epithet, audible, gives this feature of the description, *vent* referring not to sound at all, but to the quick perception of the game, and the signs of eagerness, such as kindled eye, dilated nostril, and muscular impatience, which keen relish for the sport produces. In such a connection "sprightly walking" would refer to the more lively and definite advance arising from the discovery of good vent as compared with the dissatisfied snuffings and uncertain progress when nothing is in view. The description thus includes quickened motion, eager tongue, and intense physical excitement. The passage finds an exact parallel in Henry V.'s spirited address to his soldiers before Harfleur :—

" And you, good yeomen,
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here
The mettle of your pasture ; let us swear
That you are worth your breeding : which I doubt not ;
For there is none of you so mean and base,
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start. The game's a-foot :
Follow your spirit ; and, upon this charge,
Cry ' God for Harry, England, and Saint George ! ' "

The same general allusion is contained in the well-

known line from "Julius Cæsar," "Cry havock, and let slip the dogs of war," as well as in several passages in other plays. In the lines just quoted, the reference to "the mettle of your pasture" is also derived from the *Noble Art of Venerie*. The colour of the stag, the size and texture of his antlers, his strength of wind and limb, and powers of endurance, depended very much upon the country in which he was reared, and especially upon the kind of pasture on which he browsed. Thus Du Fouilloux concludes a discourse on the different colours of the stag's coat, and the different descriptions of head, as follows:—

"There is another forrest about four leagues from thence called Chissay, in the which the harts beare heads cleane contrary, for they are great, red, and full of marrow, and are very light when they are dry. All these things I have thought good heere to alleadge, to let you know that harts beare their heads according to the pasture and feede of the country where they are bred; for the forrest of Merevant is altogether in mountaines, vales, and caves, whereas their feed is dry, leane, and of small substance. On that other side, the forrest of Chissay is a plaine country, environed with all good pasture and corne grounds, as wheat, peason, and such, whereupon they take good nouriture: which is the cause that their heads become so faire and well spreadde."

Before leaving the subject, we may notice that the word "vent" in its technical sense is used by Shakespeare's contemporaries, especially the poets, such as Spenser and Drayton. The following extract from the graphic account of stag-hunting in the fourteenth song of the "Polyolbion" illustrates this:—

"Now when the hart doth heare
The oft-bellowing hounds to vent his secret leyre,
He rouzing rusheth out, and through the brakes doth drive,
As though up by the roots the bushes he would rive,

And through the cumbrous thicks, as fearefully he makes,
 Hee with his branched head, the tender saplings shakes,
 That sprinkling their moyst pearle doe seeme to him to weepe;
 When after goes the cry with yellings loud and deepe".

It need hardly be added that *vent* in this sense is, like so many of the terms of venery, taken directly from the French, to vent the game being simply to wind, or have wind of the game. Shakespeare's very expression, indeed, exists as a French phrase, and is given to illustrate the special meaning of the noun as a hunting term.

Again, Shakespeare uses the word *train* more than once in its technical hunting sense, the most striking instance of this special use being found in "Macbeth". When Malcolm, in order to test the sincerity of Macduff's devotion, heaps vices on himself, until Macduff, in a burst of noble sorrow and indignation, renounces his enterprise in despair, Malcolm, satisfied with the result, explains the motive of his conduct as follows:—

"*Mal.* Macduff, this noble passion,
 Child of integrity, hath from my soul
 Wip'd the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
 To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
 By many of these *trains* hath sought to win me
 Into his power; and modest wisdom plucks me
 From over-credulous haste."

It has not been noticed that *trains* in this extract is a technical term both in hawking and hunting; in hawking for the lure, thrown out to reclaim a falcon given to ramble, or "rake out" as it is called, and thus in danger of escaping from the fowler; and in hunting for the bait trailed along the ground, and left exposed to tempt the animal from his lair or covert, and bring him fairly within the power of the lurking huntsman.

An extract or two from Turbervile will sufficiently exemplify this usage. The following is from a long and curious account of hunting the wolf, a common sport in France, and which in Shakespeare's day seems also to have prevailed to some extent in Ireland :—

“ When a huntsman would hunt the wolfe, he must *trayne* them by these means. First, let him looke out some fayre place a mile or more from the greate woodes where there be some close standing to place a brace of good greyhounds in, if needs be, the which should be close environed, and some ponde or water by it : there shall he kill a horse or some other great beast, and take the foure legges thereof and carye them into the woods and forests adjoyning. Then let foure goode fellows take every man a legge of the beast, and drawe it at his horse tayle all alongst the pathes and wayes in the woods until they come backe againe unto the place where the dead beast lieth : there lette them lay downe their *traynes*. And when the wolves go out in the night to prey and to feede, they wil crosse upon the *trayne* and follow it untill they come at the dead carrion : there they will feede their fill. And then let the huntsman about the breake of day go thither, and leave his horse a good way off underneath the wind, and come faire and softly to the place to espie if there be any wolves feeding.”

Again :—

“ And when the huntsman shall by these meanes have been assured of their feeding twoo nights together, then may he make preparation to hunt them on the third day ; or if they fayle to come unto the *trayne* the first or second day, then let him send out varlettes to *trayne* from about all the coverts adjoyning unto the same place : and so doing he cannot misse but draw wolves thither once within two or three nights ”.

The play of “ Hamlet ” supplies another illustration of hunting terms only partially explained. In the conversation about the players between Hamlet, Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern a technical term occurs, which, though sometimes rightly understood, is often errone-

ously interpreted, and has never been traced or elucidated in its primary meaning and use:—

“*Ham.* . . . man delights not me; no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

“*Ros.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

“*Ham.* Why did you laugh, then, when I said, man delights not me?

“*Ros.* To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we *coted* them on the way, and hither are they coming to offer you service.”

Here *cote*, in the older spelling *coat*, is usually explained, even by modern editors, according to its etymology rather than according to its actual use, while none seem to be aware of its special technical meaning. Thus Mr. Collier interprets the phrase “we coted them” to mean “we overtook them,” or, strictly, “came side by side with them,” and Mr. Staunton boldly gives the latter part of this explanation as the full meaning of the term—“coted them”—“came alongside of them”. Nares, again, while stating that the term is employed in coursing, gives the same erroneous interpretation, “coted,” *i.e.*, “went side by side,” and seems to have no real knowledge of its technical use. Mr. Dyce quotes from Caldecott a pertinent example of its use in contemporary literature, but he appears undecided as to the exact signification of the word, and unacquainted with its special secondary meaning. Both verb and noun are, however, sporting terms used in coursing of every kind, whether of the stag, the fox, or the hare. *Cote* in this technical sense is applied to a brace of greyhounds slipped together at the stag or hare, and means that one of the dogs outstrips the other and reaches the game first. In coursing the stag, it was

sufficient if the foremost dog reached and pinched; in coursing the fallow deer, he was required to pinch and hold; while in coursing the hare, he had to outstrip his fellow and give the hare a turn, in order to secure the advantage of the *cote*. This will be made clear by the following extracts from Turbervile's short treatise on coursing:—

"In coursing at a Deare, if one Greyhound go endwayes by [that is beyond] another, it is accompted a Cote, so that he which doth so do by his fellow do reach the Deare and pinch: and in coursing of a redde Deare, that Greyhound which doth first pinch, shall winne the wager: but in coursing of a fallow Deare, your Greyhound must pinche and hold, or else he winneth not the wager".

Again, from the same treatise:—

"In coursing at the Hare, it is not materiall which dog kylleth her (which hunters call bearing of an Hare), but he that giveth most Cotes, or most turnes, winneth the wager. A Cote is when a Greyhound goeth endwayes by his fellow and giveth the Hare a turn (which is called setting a Hare about), but if he coast and so come by his fellow, that is no Cote. Likewise, if one Greyhound doe go by another, and then be not able to reach the Hare himselfe and turne her, this is but stripping and no Cote."

The definition of *cote* in the Duke of Norfolk's celebrated coursing rules, first published in Shakespeare's own day, is identical with Turbervile's; and Mr. Thacker, the best modern authority on the subject, in expounding the definition, says: "A cote is the first performance which takes place, or can be expected to take place, after the dogs are slipped at the hare. One dog outruns the other, and turns the hare, and with a good hare, and with one dog more speedy than the other, this is repeated many times in some courses." To cote

is thus not simply to overtake, but to overpass, to outstrip, this being the distinctive meaning of the term. If one dog were originally behind the other, the cote would of course involve overtaking as its condition, but overtaking simply is not coting. Going beyond is the essential point, the term being usually applied under circumstances where overtaking is impossible—to dogs who start together and run abreast until the cote takes place. So Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, having coted the players in their way, reach the palace first, and have been for some time in conversation with Hamlet before the strolling company arrive. In its secondary or metaphorical use, the word uniformly retains the same distinctive meaning. In the literature of the time, to cote others in wealth, beauty, or worth, is to excel them in these respects. Thus Drant, in his translation, or rather paraphrase of Horace, published within a year or two of Shakespeare's birth, applies it to the passion of avarice, the insatiable desire to surpass all others in gain. The lines in which the verb occurs are, in fact, an expansion of the hemistich, *Hunc atque hunc superare laboret* :—

“How happeneth it, his owne estate
 That no man lyketh beste ?
 But teenes, if that his neyghbour's goate
 A bygger bagge doth beare
 Than his, or yeelds her mylke sum deale
 More flowyng and more cleare :
 Nor ever will compare him selfe
 Unto the greater sorte,
 Whose state is base, and bad as his,
 Who lyves in meane apporte :
 But roves, and shoots at further marks,
 Now him he doth contende

To passe in coyne ; now him again,
And so there is no ende.
For he that thincks to *coate* all men
And all to overgoe,
In runnyng shall some ritcher fynde
Who still will bid him hoe."

In its earlier use *cote* may, indeed, as the etymology suggests, have primarily referred to the hound's reaching the game rather than to his outstripping his fellow in the chase. But as outstripping his fellow was the necessary condition of reaching the game first, this element of meaning gradually became more prominent, until at length, as we have seen, the term, both in its technical and secondary uses, came to mean not simply to overtake but to outgo, to advance beyond, and generally to surpass or excel.

In connection with coursing, we may note the discussion that has arisen among the commentators on the meaning of *lym* or *lyam*, and *leash*, as applied to hounds. In the well-known rhyming list of dogs given by Edgar in his assumed character of Poor Tom in "King Lear," one of the kinds specified is *lym*, or, in other words, lym-hound; and in the first part of "Henry IV.," *leash* is used for three, in the phrase "a leash of drawers," immediately afterwards enumerated as Tom, Dick, and Francis. There has been some hesitation amongst the editors as to the exact technical meaning and use of these terms. But a single extract from the old *Art of Venerie* settles the question:—

"We finde some difference of termes between hounds and greyhounds. As of greyhounds two make a brase, and of hounds a couple. Of greyhounds three make a *lease*, and of hounds a couple and a halfe. We let slippe a greyhound, and we cast off a hound. The string wherewith we leade a greyhound is called a *lease*, and

for a hound a *lyame*. The greyhound hath his collar, and the hound hath his couples. Many other differences there be, but these are most usual."

It has been conjectured with much probability that another word, *uncape*, used in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," must have been a technical term in fox-hunting. It occurs in the humorous scene where the jealous Ford, accompanied by a posse of his friends and neighbours, arrives at his own house, resolved to hunt for the disturber of his peace, whom he declares to be harboured there by the guilty connivance of his wife. On entering the house, he meets the servants going out with the buck-basket in which Falstaff is almost smothered beneath the soiled linen:—

"*Ford*. Pray you, come near: if I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me; then let me be your jest; I deserve it. How now! whither bear you this?

"*Serv*. To the laundress, forsooth.

"*Mrs. Ford*. Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? You were best meddle with buck-washing.

"*Ford*. Buck! I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck, buck, buck! Ay buck; I warrant you, buck; and of the season too, it shall appear. [*Exeunt Servants with the basket.*] Gentlemen, I have dreamed to-night; I'll tell you my dream. Here, here, here, be my keys: ascend my chambers; search, seek, find out: I'll warrant we'll unkennel the fox. Let me stop this way first. [*Locks the door.*] So now *uncape*."

Here it seems clear from the context that *uncape* must be a term connected with fox-hunting, but no instance of its technical use has been discovered, and hardly any two editors agree as to its exact meaning. Warburton asserts, with his usual confidence, that it means "to dig out the fox when earthed"; while Stevens maintains that the term refers to a bag-fox. "The allusion is," he says, "to the stopping every hole at which a fox

could enter before they uncape or turn him out of the bag in which he was brought." Hanmer substituted the reading *uncouple*; and Nares, in support of this interpretation, and with a special eye to Stevens' note, says that "Falstaff is the fox, and he is supposed to be hidden, or kenneled, somewhere in the house; no expression therefore relative to a bag-fox can be applicable, because such a fox would be already in the hands of the hunters. The *uncaping* is decidedly to begin the hunt after him; when the holes for escape had been stopped." This seems from the context to be the real meaning of the word. It must indicate the commencement of the hunt, or, in other words, the uncoupling of the hounds. But the text need not be altered to bring out this signification. Though no example of its technical use has yet been found, there can be little doubt that uncape was a sporting term locally or colloquially employed instead of uncouple. Nor, after all, is it very difficult to explain its origin and use in this sense. Turbervile, after stating that amongst other differences "the greyhound hath his collar and the hound his couples," intimates the existence of many more technical terms, of which those he gives are simply the most usual. Cape might very well have been one of the terms for collar or couple, as it undoubtedly had this meaning in Shakespeare's day. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, while cape meant, as it still does, the top or upper part of a garment, it was usually restricted to a much smaller portion than the word designates now—a part encircling the neck rather than covering the shoulders. It meant, in fact, a neck-band, most commonly of the kind termed a falling-band; in other words, a collar,

the larger tippet, covering the shoulders, being termed in contradistinction to the smaller cape or collar, "a Spanish cape". Thus Minshew and Howel give us synonyms for "the cape of a garment," French, *collet*, explained as "the collar of a jerkin, the neck-piece of any garment"; Spanish, *cabeçon*, explained as "the neck-band of a shirt, the neck of a doublet, the collar of a garment"; Latin, *collare*, "neck-band, or collar". The Latin dictionaries of Wase and Coles give the same explanation of cape as part of a dress. Shakespeare himself uses it in the same sense—as another word for neck-band or collar. In the "Taming of the Shrew," amongst the directions given to the tailor by Grumio for the making of Katharina's robe or dress, are specified, "a loose-bodied gown with a *small compassed cape*". Here the epithet compassed means circular, so that the item is equivalent to a small circular collar, or falling band around the throat. Whether cape is a technical term in fox-hunting or not, Shakespeare was therefore perfectly entitled to use it, as he evidently does, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," as a synonym for couple or collar. As given in the old pictures, the broad, loose, indented leather bands or collars to which the lyam or leash was attached, completely realise the contemporary notion of a cape, and no mistake could possibly arise from the use of the term in this sense. The words *uncape*, *uncollar*, or *uncouple* would each mean the same thing, while all would be easily, if not equally intelligible.

We may conclude the allusions to hunting by an illustration or two of the beautiful passage in the "Midsummer Night's Dream," where Theseus celebrates the music of his hounds in full cry:—

"*The.* Go, one of you, find out the forester :
 For now our observation is perform'd :
 And since we have the vaward of the day,
 My love shall hear the music of my hounds.—
 Uncouple in the western valley : let them go !
 Despatch, I say, and find the forester.
 We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top
 And mark the musical confusion
 Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

"*Hip.* I was with Hercules, and Cadmus, once,
 When in a wood of Crete they bayed the bear
 With hounds of Sparta ; never did I hear
 Such gallant chiding ; for, besides the groves,
 The skies, the fountains, every region near
 Seem'd all one mutual cry. I never heard
 So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

"*The.* My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
 So flewed, so sanded ; and their heads are hung
 With ears that sweep away the morning dew ;
 Crook-kneed, and dew-lap'd like Thessalian bulls ;
 Slow in pursuit, but matched in mouth like bells,
 Each under each. A cry more tuneable
 Was never halloo'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
 In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly :
 Judge, when you hear."

Shakespeare might probably enough, as the commentators suggest, have derived his knowledge of Cretan and Spartan hounds from Golding's translation of Ovid, where they are commemorated in the description of Actæon's tragical chase and death. But in enumerating the points of the slow, sure, deep-mouthed hound, it can hardly be doubted he had in view the celebrated Talbot breed nearer home. A contemporary writer celebrates the virtues of these hounds in terms that recall Shakespeare's own description :—

"For the shape of your hound, it must be according to the climate where he is bred, and according to the natural composition

of his body, as thus, if you would choose a large, heavy, slow, true Talbot-like hound, you must choose him which hath a round, big, thick head, with a short nose uprising, and large open nostrils, which shows that he is of a good and quick scent, his ears exceeding large, thin, and down-hanging, much lower than his chaps, and the flews of his upper lips almost two inches lower than his nether chaps; which shows a merry deep mouth and a loud ringer, his back strong and straight, yet rather rising, than inwardly yielding, which shows much toughness and endurance".

With regard to the other point of the hounds being "matched in mouth like bells," it is clear that in Shakespeare's day the greatest attention was paid to the musical quality of the cry. It was a ruling consideration in the formation of a pack that it should possess the musical fulness and strength of a perfect canine quire. And hounds of good voice were selected and arranged in the hunting chorus on the same general principles that govern the formation of a cathedral or any other more articulate choir. The writer already quoted brings this curious feature fully out; and as the subject has not been illustrated by the commentators, and is in itself of considerable interest, we may venture on a tolerably long extract:—

"For sweetness of cry.

"If you would have your kennell for sweetness of cry, then you must compound it of some large dogges, that have deepe solemne mouthes, and are swift in spending, which must, as it were, beare the base in the consort, then a double number of roaring, and loud ringing mouthes, which must beare the counter tenor, then some hollow, plaine, sweete mouthes, which must beare the meane or middle part; and soe with these three parts of musicke you shall make your cry perfect; and heerein you shall observe that these hounds thus mixt, doe run just and even together, and not hang off loose one from another, which is the wildest sight that may be, and you shall understand that this

composition is best to be made of the swiftest and largest deep mouthed dog, the slowest middle siz'd dog, and the shortest leg'd slender dog, amongst these you cast in a couple or two of small singing beagles, which as small trebles may warble amongst them ; the cry will be a great deal the more sweeter.

" For lowdnesse of cry.

" If you would have your kennell for lowdnes of mouth, you shall not then choose the hollow deepe mouth, but the loud clanging mouth, which spendeth freely and sharpely, and, as it were, redoubleth in the utterance : and if you mix with them the mouth that roareth and the mouth that whineth, the crye will bee both the louder and smarter ; and these hounds are for the most part of the middle size, neither extreame tail, nor extreame deepe flewed, such as for the most part your Shropshire and pure Worcestershire dogs are ; and the more equally you compound these mouthes, having as many roarers as spenders, and as many whiners as of either of the other, the louder and pleasanter your crye will be, especially if it be in sounding tall woods, or under the echo of rocks.

" For deepnesse of cry.

" If you would have your kennell for depth of mouth, then you shall compound it of the largest dogges, which have the greatest mouthes, the deepest flewes, such as your West Countrie, Cheshire, and Lancashire dogges are ; and to five or six couple of base mouthes, you shall not adde above two couple of counter tenors, as many meanes, and not above one couple of roarers, which being heard but now and then, as at the opening or hitting of a sent, will give much sweetnesse to the solemnes and gravenesse of the crye, and the musick thereof will bee much more delightfull to the eares of every beholder."

Next to hunting, hawking was perhaps the most popular field sport in Shakespeare's day. In many parts of the country, indeed, it was more in vogue, or, at least, more habitually pursued, than hunting itself. Before the land was generally drained, the midland and eastern counties afforded peculiar facilities for the aquatic branch of hawking, which was the more exciting

kind of sport. The flags of their marshy levels, their reedy hollows, the wooded banks and quiet pools of their winding streams, abounded with aquatic birds, and especially with the crane and the heron, the favourite objects of this princely recreation. The neighbourhood of Stratford itself was peculiarly favourable for aquatic falconry, the broad sweep of the tranquil Avon with its bosky margins and reedy shallows affording abundant food and inviting shelter for the larger and more important species of waterfowl. And there can be little doubt that Shakespeare in boyhood and youth had often accompanied a brilliant hawking-party, or at a little distance marked the progress of the sport, had seen the falconer spring the kingly heron from his sedgy nest, and followed with eager gaze the fortunes of the nearly-balanced conflict that ensued,—had watched in narrowing circles far up the sky the well-trained falcon stoop on her noble quarry until the final swoop put an end to the airy battle. However this may be, Shakespeare is perfectly familiar with the technical terms used in hawking, and his dramas abound with phrases and allusions derived from this source. We shall attempt a few illustrations of these allusions in special reference to words and phrases not as yet clearly understood or accurately explained. The first is one of the many much-disputed passages in “Measure for Measure”. It occurs in the dialogue between Claudio and Isabella, where the latter reveals the true character of Angelo:—

“This outward-sainted deputy,
Whose settled visage and deliberate word
Nips youth i’ the head, and follies doth *emmeno*
As falcon doth the fowl, is yet a devil;
His filth within being cast, he would appear
A pond as deep as hell”.

Here *emmew* is a term well known in falconry, the mew being the place where the hawks were kept and tended during the critical period of moulting. So long as this process lasted, while the birds were casting their feathers, they were kept close, mewed up, or emmewed. But in the passage just quoted this sense hardly seems to suit the context. Isabella is obviously describing an active policy of repression on the part of Angelo. During the lax administration of the duke, youthful vices, being virtually winked at, had been freely indulged in; and follies, fearing no check, had made head in the city until it became needful to awake the slumbering powers of the law, and carry into effect its sterner enactments. The duke dwells on this necessity in explaining the motives of his conduct:—

“*Duke.* We have strict statutes and most biting laws,—
The needful bits and curbs to headstrong steeds,—
Which for this fourteen years we have let sleep,
Even like an o’ergrown lion in a cave,
That goes not out to prey. Now, as fond fathers,
Having bound up the threatening twigs of birch,
Only to stick it in their children’s sight
For terror, not to use, in time the rod
Becomes more mock’d than fear’d; so our decrees,
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead;
And liberty plucks justice by the nose;
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
Goes all decorum.”

Angelo was to strike home, and we know from the earlier scenes of the play that he had at once magnified his temporary office and ridden the body politic with a tight curb and sharpened spur, putting into extreme force the more rigorous penal acts. No doubt his administration of the law would soon strike the evil-doers

with terror, and make them for a time quiet enough. But in these early days he was inflicting severe penalties on convicted offenders, and it is to this feature of his policy that Isabella especially refers. Youth must have made some head before it could be nipped; and in the same way it is natural to suppose that follies must have manifested themselves before they could be actually known, or publicly dealt with by the deputy. The word *emmew* does not express this meaning, and Johnson's explanation of the phrase, "forces follies to lie in cover, without daring to show themselves," seems comparatively weak and inapplicable. From some feeling of this difficulty, probably, Mr. Keightley, in his *Shakespeare Expositor*, proposes to read *enew*, instead of *emmew*. He does this avowedly on the strength of a single passage which he quotes from Nash's *Quaternio*. This exemplifies what we have already said about fancied discoveries being often anticipated. Long before we knew of Mr. Keightley's suggestion we had ourselves marked the passage in Nash for the same purpose. After all, however, Mr. Keightley does not really anticipate what we have to say on the subject, as he gives no reason for the proposed change, and does not understand the origin, meaning, and technical use of the verb he substitutes for *emmew*. The passage in Nash forms part of a glowing description of field sports, and is as follows:—

"And to heare an Accipitrary relate againe how he went forth in a cleare, calme, and sun-shine evening, about an houre before the sunne did usually maske himselfe, unto the river, where finding of a mallard, he whistled off his faulcon, and how shee flew from him as if shee would never have turned head againe, yet presently upon a shoote came in, how then by degrees, by little and little, by flying about and about, shee mounted so high, untill shee had lessened

herself to the view of the beholder, to the shape of a pigeon or partridge, and had made the height of the moone the place of her flight, how presently upon the landing of the fowle, shee came down like a stone and *enewed* it, and suddenly got up againe, and suddenly upon a second landing came downe againe, and missing of it, in the downcome recovered it beyond expectation, to the admiration of the beholder, at a long flight ”.

The chief difficulty in the passage is as to the meaning of the verb *enew*, and this was for some time a considerable puzzle. Though freely used as a technical term in the older manuals of hawking, none of them, so far as our examination went, afforded any explanation of the word. Thus Turbervile says: “ When your falcon is accustomed to flee for it, and will lye upon you at a great gate, or at a reasonable pitch, and will come and holde in the head at your voyce, and luring, then may you goe to the river where you shall finde any fowle, and there shall it behove you to use such policie that you may cover the fowle, and get your hawke to a good gate above the fowle. And when her head is in, then lay out the fowle, and cry *hey gar, gar, gar*. And if your falcon doe stoope them, and *enew* them once or twice, then quickly thrust your hand in your hawking bagge, and make her a traine with a ducke seeled.” And in the same connection, in a short chapter on “ How to doe when your river hawke will take stand in a tree,” the word occurs again: “ If you have a falcon which (as sone as hee hath once or twice stooped and *enewed* a fowle) will take stand on a tree, you must as much as may be, eschue to flee in places where trees be ”. Again, Markham, in his treatise on hawking, says: “ To make your hawke fly at fowle, which is called the flight at the river, you shall first

whistle off an approved well quarried hawke that is a sure killer, and let her *enew* the fowle so long till she bring it to the plunge; then take her down and reward her". But while thus using the term neither Turberville nor Markham explains its meaning. From the examples of its use, however, it soon became apparent that *enew* was restricted to aquatic falconry—"the flight at the river," as it was called—while the probable etymology connected it directly with water. When a flight at water-fowl was determined on, the falconer, advancing towards the river, whistled off his hawk up the wind at some little distance from the spot where the duck or mallard, the heron or crane, was known to be. When the hawk had attained to her gate, or, in other words, reached a tolerable pitch in her flight, the falconer, with his dogs and assistants, "made in" upon the fowl, compelling it to rise, and forcing the flight, if possible, in the direction of the land. This was technically termed "landing" the fowl, a very vital point in aquatic falconry. Then, after some preliminary wheeling on the wing, offensive and defensive, the falcon would swiftly stoop on her prey, while the fowl, to avoid the fatal stroke, would instinctively make for the water again, where it would be for the moment comparatively safe. For in order that the falcon might stoop and strike with effect, it was necessary to have solid ground immediately below. If the fowl succeeded in swerving towards the water, she escaped with comparative impunity. In this case the hawk might stoop, and sometimes apparently even strike, without doing much damage as the blow could not be followed up, the fowl taking refuge in diving. In this case the fowl was said to be *enewed*—the hawk *enewed* the fowl; that is, forced

it back to the water again, from which it had to be driven afresh by the falconer and landed before the hawk could stoop and seize, or strike and truss her quarry. The fowl was often enewed once or twice before it was landed effectively enough for the final swoop. From this explanation of its meaning the etymology of *enew* will be apparent; and in support of it we have, in Kelham's Norman Dictionary, "*Enewunce de draps*, watering of cloth"; while Cotgrave gives *eneauer*, "to turn into water," and "*eneaiué*, watered, turned into water". All these points are confirmed and verified by Drayton's vivid description of the sport, where, fortunately, the word occurs accompanied by an explanatory note. In his twentieth song the poet gives a detailed account of the flight at the brook, from which we extract the closing lines:—

"Then making to the flood, to force the fowls to rise,
The fierce and eager hawks, down thrilling from the skies,
Make sundry cancellers ere they the fowl can reach,
Which then to save their lives their wings do lively stretch,
But when the whizzing bells the silent air do cleave,
And that their greatest speed, them vainly do deceive;
And the sharp cruel hawks, they at their backs do view,
Themselves for very fear they instantly *ineaw*."

"The hawks get up again into their former place,
And ranging here and there, in that their airy race;
Still as the fearful fowl attempt to 'scape away,
With many a stouping brave, them in again they lay.
But when the falconers take their hawking-poles in hand,
And crossing of the brook, do put it over land;
The hawk gives it a souse, that makes it to rebound,
Well near the height of man, sometimes above the ground."

Here the word *enew*, which the poet spells in his own way, has the marginal explanation, "lay the fowls

again in the water". The verb occurs in the same connection, in describing the flight at the brook, in Turbervile's own curious poem "In Commendation of Hawking":—

"No fellow to the flight at brooke, that game is full of glee,
It is a sport the stouping of a roysting Hawke to see.
And if she misse, to marke her how she then gets up amaine,
For best advantage, to *enew* the springing fowle againe,
Who if be landed as it ought, then is it sure to die,
Or if she slippe, a joy to see, the Hawke at randon flie."

There can be no doubt, therefore, as to the origin and technical meaning of the term. From this primary sense it seems to have acquired the secondary signification of "to check," "to drive back," and "relentlessly pursue". It would thus be naturally applied to a policy of extreme and vindictive severity, and we can have little doubt that in Isabella's speech *enew*, as the more expressive word, and the one which in all respects best harmonises with the context, should be substituted for *emmew*. The imagery is that of the penal law, or rather perhaps of despotic power in the person of the "outward-sainted deputy" pursuing its victims with reiterated strokes, and allowing them little chance of ultimate escape.

The closing lines of the passage contain another allusion to hawking, the explanation of which will throw some light on a doubtful word in "Hamlet":—

"His filth within being cast, he would appear
A pond as deep as hell".

The reference is to the hawk when first taken out of the mew, and the result which gross feeding combined with long confinement and inaction produces. The hawk was then fat, glutted, full of grease, wholly unfit

for active use, and in order to be thoroughly purged from internal filth, was subjected to a course of scouring diet. The technical name for such diet was *casting*, and as the result the hawk was said to have *cast* her filth. Again, the technical name for the whole process of cleansing the hawk from internal defilement was *enseam*. The use of this term will be made clear by an extract from Turbervile's chapter on "How you shall *enseame* a hawke or give her castings and scourings" :—

"Some falcons be harder to *enseame* than some others are, for the longer that a falcon hath been in the hand, the harder she is to be *enseamed* : and an old mewed falcon of the wood which hath mewed but one cote in the falconer's handes is much easier to be *enseamed* than a yonger falcon which hath been longer in the falconer's handes : the reason is, because a hawk that preyeth for her selfe doth feede cleaner and better according to her nature, and upon more wholesome meates, than she doth when she is in man's handes ; so that it is no marvaile though she bee not so fowle within when she is at her own dyet, as when another man feedeth her. For a hawke which is in our keeping doth feed greedily both on skinne, feathers, and all that comes to hand. Neyther is she mewed with so cleane and holesome feeding, nor doth endue her meate so well, nor hath such open ayre at times convenient as a hawke which is at large to prey for her selfe."

He goes on to describe the marks by which it may be known when you draw the hawk out of the mew whether she be greasy : "by the thies if they be round and fat, and also by the body if she be full in hand, and her flesh be round as high as the breast-bone". If so, she needs a course of castings. While the hawk was being *enseamed* it was necessary to keep the space beneath the perch clear, in order to ascertain by the result her actual state and decide when the castings had done their work. The whole process afforded striking analogies for depicting figuratively the moral

and physical results of sloth, sensuality, and self-indulgence; and Shakespeare has employed these materials, not only in the passage under review, but in the closet-scene between Hamlet and his mother:—

“*Queen.* O Hamlet, speak no more ;
Thou turn’st mine eyes into my very soul ;
And there I see such black and grainèd spots
As will not leave their tinct.

“*Ham.* Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an *enseamed* bed,
Stew’d in corruption, honeying and making love
Over the nasty sty.

“*Queen.* O, speak to me no more ;
These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears ;
No more, sweet Hamlet !”

There has been some discussion among the commentators as to the exact signification of *enseamed* in this passage, but Dyce follows his predecessors in explaining it to mean “greasy”. This, no doubt, is one meaning of the word, and it gives a sense intelligible enough. *Seam* or *same* is a word for lard, used locally in various parts of England, but especially in Lincolnshire. A story told of a country woman in Lincoln market illustrates this meaning of the term. Butter was often, then as now, adulterated by being mixed with lard, and a lady coming to purchase of the woman asked, “Is the butter quite pure?” to which the seller confidently but ambiguously replied, “Yes, it is the very best butter at both ends and *same* in the middle”. *Seam* is moreover used by Shakespeare himself for lard in “Troilus and Cressida”. The hawking term *enseam* is traceable to this source, lard having been originally a principal ingredient in the castings or scouring diet given to the gluttoned falcon. Thus Turbervile says:

"Within a few days after the falcon is drawn out of the mew ye must scour her and enream her with the foresaid medicine of lard, sugar, mace, and saffron, with very little aloes, for if ye confect it with too much aloes you shall bring her over low". Though the term thus originally meant enlarding, or, on homeopathic principles, cleansing a hawk from grease by means of grease, it naturally acquired a much stronger sense, and came to mean the stirring up and casting forth of filthy matter. In this sense it is applied by Hamlet to the moral pollution of his mother's incestuous marriage, the bridal bed itself being defiled by such a union.

Again, there has been a good deal of discussion about the word *gouts* occurring in the dagger-scene in "Macbeth". The results of this discussion are well summed up in the note on the word by the Cambridge editors in their Clarendon Press edition of the play:—

"*Gouts*, drops, from the French, *goutte*, and, according to stage-tradition, so pronounced. Stevens quotes from 'The Art of Good Lyving,' 1508, 'All herbys shall sweyt read goutys of water as blood'. And 'gowtyth' for 'droppeth' occurs in an Old English MS. (Halliwell, 'Archaic and Prov. Dict.,' s. v.). 'Gutty,' from the same root, is also used in English heraldry."

It has not been noticed, however, that the word is a technical term in falconry, and that its special sense in this art applies with peculiar force to its use in the dagger-scene soliloquy. *Gouts* is the term applied to the little knob-like swellings or indurated drops which appear at times on the legs and feet of the hawk. This will be clear by an extract from Turbervile's chapter on "The swelling in the hawk's feet we term the pin or pin-gout":—

"Diverse times there rise up knobs upon the feet of hawks as upon the feet of capons, which some call galles, and some *gouts*.

They come sometimes of the swelling of the legs and thighs, which I have spoken of before, or of other diseases that breed of the abundance of humours within the hawke, which must first be scoured with the last mentioned pilles three or foure days together."

The term as thus used has peculiar force when applied, as Macbeth applies it, to the rapidly coagulating drops of blood on the blade and dudgeon of the fatal dagger.

The references to hawking may be closed by a brief illustration of a passage in the first part of "Henry VI." that has never as yet been very satisfactorily explained. It occurs in the angry scene between the protector, Gloucester, and his rival, the Bishop of Winchester, before the Tower gates. The bishop having forbidden the warders to admit the protector, fierce taunts, menaces, and recriminations prelude the actual conflict between their followers that ensues:—

"*Win.* How now, ambitious Humphrey! what means this?

"*Glo.* Peel'd priest, dost thou command me be shut out?

"*Win.* I do, thou most usurping proditor,
And not protector of the king or realm.

"*Glo.* Stand back, thou manifest conspirator,
Thou that contriv'dst to murder our dear lord;
Thou that givest whores indulgences to sin:
I'll canvass thee in thy broad cardinal's hat,
If thou proceed in this thy insolence.

"*Win.* Nay, stand thou back; I will not budge a foot:
This be Damascus, be thou cursèd Cain,
To slay thy brother Abel, if thou wilt.

"*Glo.* I will not slay thee, but I'll drive thee back:
Thy scarlet robes as a child's bearing-cloth
I'll use to carry thee out of this place."

In this passage the phrase, "I'll canvass thee," has been variously explained. Stevens interprets it to mean, "I'll tumble thee into thy great hat, and shake thee as bran and meal are shaken in a sieve"; while Malone

says: "Gloucester probably means that he will toss the cardinal in a sheet, even while he was invested with the peculiar badge of his ecclesiastical dignity". But neither of these explanations, adopted in the main by later editors, hits the distinctive allusion of the phrase, or brings out its real significance. Canvass was a technical name for the peculiarly constructed net with which wild hawks were snared by the falconer, in order to be made and manned for the fist, the flight, and the lure. At least, it was a term technically applied to catching wild hawks in this way, and to be canvassed in this sense was to be taken, trapped, or netted. The following passage from Pettie's *Palace of Pleasure*, referring to one who had been jilted in love, brings out this meaning:—

"For ever after, he fled all occasions of women's company, perswading himselfe that as hee which toucheth pitch shal be defiled therewith: so he that useth women's company shal be beguiled therewith. And as the mouse having escaped out of the trap, wil hardly be allured againe with the intising baite, or as the hawke having binonce *canvassed* in the nettes, wil make it daungerous to strike againe at the stale: so he having bin caught in the snares of crafty counterfeyting, and now having unwound himself there-out, and wonne the fields of freedome, avoided all occasions which might bring him eftsoones in bondage."

Nares gives another example, from the "Mirror for Magistrates":—

"That restlesse I, much like the hunted hare,
Or as the *canvist* kite doth fear the snare".

Of the word, however, Nares frankly says: "It seems to mean entrapped; but I can give no further account of it". Canvass in this sense may, however, be connected with the Italian *cannevo* and *cannevaccio*, given as alternative forms of *canapa* and *canapaccia*, and ex-

plained as "all manner of hemp, hempen halters, thread, coarse hemp and canvass, coarse hards". It could thus very naturally have the general meaning of coarse hempen netting. Or it may possibly be connected with the *canebis* or *chanvre*, against which the experienced swallow warned the small birds:—

" Il arriva qu'au temps que le *chanvre* se sème,
 Elle vit un manant en couvrir maints sillons.
 'Ceci ne me plait pas,' dit-elle aux oisillons :
 'Je vous plains ; car, pour moi, dans ce péril extrême,
 Je saurai m'éloigner, ou vivre en quelque coin.
 Voyez-vous cette main qui par les airs chemine ?
 Un jour viendra, qui n'est pas loin,
 Que ce qu'elle répand sera votre ruine.
 De là naitront engins à vous envelopper,
 Et lacets pour vous attraper,
 Enfin mainte et mainte machine
 Qui causera dans la saison
 Votre mort ou votre prison.'"

Whatever may be its origin, there can, however, be no doubt as to the special meaning and use of the term in connection with hawking, and it is, we think, clearly in this sense that Gloucester employs it in the passage quoted. The phrase has, indeed, peculiar expressiveness when applied to the broad-brimmed cardinal's hat, with its long strings knotted into net-like meshes on either side. The felicity of the phrase becomes even more apparent when the shape and working of the net in which hawks were snared are known. The apparatus for catching wild hawks consisted of a strong semi-circular bow of wood or iron, with a net attached, and fixed in the ground on either side, so as to move freely backwards and forwards. When baited for the hawk the bow was in an upright position, both the

bow itself and the net attached to it being partially hidden by green twigs. The bait, stale, or lure was usually a live bird, such as a pigeon, fixed and fluttering within the sweep of the descending bow. Strings were attached to the bow on either side, and held by the falconer, concealed at a distance. By this means, when the hawk swooped on the prey the falling bow covered her with the encircling net. If the meshes happened to be too large, or the machinery were unskilfully worked, the hawk sometimes managed to escape, and hence the allusions in the passages quoted. Now, the circular sweep of the cardinal's hat with its knotted strings had a not unapt resemblance to the hawk-net machinery; and Gloucester, in saying, "I'll canvass thee in thy broad cardinal's hat," expressed his determination to trap and seize the arrogant churchman, if he persisted in his violent courses. That he really meant to abridge the cardinal's liberty by seizing his person is apparent from the context in which he says he will use the scarlet robe as a child's bearing-cloth to carry him away, the colour of the robe having reminded him of the scarlet mantle in which the children of wealthy parents were carried to the font for baptism. Even in this there is, however, an obscure reference to the imagery already employed, for the hawk when caught was carefully wrapped up, often placed in a bag, to prevent any injury to the feathers from bating. Gloucester thus expresses his determination to catch the grasping cardinal in his own trap, and mew him up where he would have no power to carry out his treasonable designs.

We shall next attempt to clear up some points still obscure connected with the natural history, rural bot-

any, and social usages of Shakespeare's time. The first is a passage in "Hamlet," which the critics and commentators agree, with singular unanimity, must be corrupt. It occurs in the play-scene, after the performance has been suddenly stopped by order of the king, and the listening court circle broken up "with most admired disorder," by the abrupt and excited exit of the royal party. Hamlet is left alone with Horatio, exulting in the success of his project. The play has caught effectually the conscience of the king, and in Hamlet's view he stands self-convicted of the unnatural crime. In the strange excitement produced by this complete confirmation of his worst fears, Hamlet, with a sort of assumed gaiety, indulges in snatches of verse, fragments of well-known ballads, that express in a fitful, disjointed way the feelings of the moment :—

"Ham. For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself ; and now reigns here
A very, very—*Peacock* ".

The readings of the Quartos and Folios are variously *pajock*, *pajocke*, and *paiock*, *paiocke* ; but all agree that these are only various spellings of the same word, that word being peacock. Here, however, the real difficulty commences. The majority of critics maintain that the word, in such a connection, has no meaning, and makes nonsense of the verse. Some of the earlier editors, it is true, attempted to explain it ; but the explanations were feeble, if not wholly irrelevant, and have not been generally accepted. Thus, Pope says the allusion is to the fable of the birds choosing the peacock instead of the eagle as their king. Collier, while admitting the difficulty, suggests that the fable alluded to may be

that of the crow adorning itself with peacocks' feathers. Theobald rejected the word altogether, substituting for it *paddock*, or toad. Other suggested emendations are *hedghehog*, *padge-hawk*, *polack*, and, amongst the latest and strangest, that by Dr. Leo, of *hiccups*, as a stage direction. But these suggestions are only so much wasted ingenuity. The Folio word is not only the right one, but peculiarly emphatic and expressive. In discussing the passage the critics have forgotten the character assigned to the peacock in the natural history of the time, as well as in popular opinion and belief. Looked at from this point of view, the word peacock expresses in a concentrated form the odious qualities of the guilty king, the bird being, in fact, the accredited representative of inordinate pride and envy, as well as of unnatural cruelty and lust. The most popular manual of natural history in Shakespeare's day, for example, gives the following account:—

“ And the pecocke is a bird that loveth not his young, for the male searcheth out the female, and seeketh out her egges for to break them, that he may so occupy him the more in his lecherie. And the female dreadeth that, and hideth busily her egges, lest the pecocke might soone find them. And Aristotle sayth that the pe-cocke hath an unsteadfast and evill shapen head, as it were the head of a serpent, and with a crest. And he hath a simple pace, and a small necke, and areared, and a blew breast, and a taile ful of bewty, distinguished on high of wonderfulle fairness: and he hath the foulest feet and riveled. And he wondereth at the fairnesse of his fethers, and areareth them up as it were a circle about his head, and then he looketh to his feet, and seeth the foulennesse of his feet, and lyke as he wer ashamed he leteth his fethers fall sodeinlye: and all the taile downward, as though he tooke no heed of the fairnesse of his fethers: and he hath an horrible voice. And as one sayth, he hath a voice of a feend, the head of a serpent, and the pace of a theefe. And Plinius sayth that the pecocke hath envie

to man's profit, and swalloweth his owne durt : for it is full medicinal, but it is seldom found".

This last is a curiously dark touch of malevolence added to the generally repulsive character of the bird. In the whole fauna of the time, therefore, Hamlet could not have selected the name of bird or beast that expressed with greater emphasis the hateful union of corrupted passion and evil life that now usurped the throne and bed of the buried majesty of Denmark.

We turn for a moment from the popular fauna to the wild and provincial flora of Shakespeare's day. It is needless to say a word about the poet's love of flowers, and his intimate acquaintance with the richer garden varieties, as separate works have been published to illustrate this feature of his writings. But Shakespeare's fondness for wild flowers, and subtle appreciation of their place and influence as elements of natural scenery, are equally noteworthy. He had the keenest enjoyment of outdoor life, and in his long country rambles in the neighbourhood of Stratford the sweet wayside "nurselings of the vernal skies" had touched his imagination and his heart, and left an impression never to be effaced. Nor does he scruple at times to describe his humble favourites of the meadows, the hedgerows, and the water-courses, by the local names through which he first became familiar with them. This has been a source of some confusion and perplexity in the interpretation of his allusions. We may illustrate this point in relation to a line on which perhaps more ink has been spilt than on any other line of Shakespeare's dramas. It occurs on the invocation of Iris to Ceres in the Masque of the "Tempest":—

"*Iris*. Ceres, most bounteous lady, thy rich leas
Of wheat, rye, barley, vetches, oats, and pease ;
Thy turfy mountains, where live nibbling sheep,
And flat meads thatch'd with stover, them to keep ;
Thy banks with *pioned* and *twilled* brims,
Which spongy April at thy hest betrimms,
To make cold nymphs chaste crowns ; and thy broom-groves,
Whose shadow the dismissed bachelor loves ".

Here the chief difficulties are the words italicised in the fifth line, especially the first. What *pioned* means, or can mean, has been the great crux with the commentators. An early suggested emendation was *peonied* ; but the objections to this are that the peony is not a wild-flower, does not grow in marshy grounds, has, in fact, no connection with river brims, and does not bloom in April. Other emendations have, from time to time, been suggested, but, curiously enough, the one which has found as much acceptance as any, is what may be called the hedging and ditching explanation—that *pioned* means dug down, and *twilled*, ridged, or staked up, as though the river brims were rural dykes or suburban drains. Even supposing the meaning here assigned to the disputed terms were legitimate or even possible, the explanation certainly savours far more of the commentator's prose than of Shakespeare's poetry. Without noticing any of the other explanations and emendations that have been attempted, we proceed to offer an interpretation that, while preserving the Folio text, gives it a consistent and poetical meaning. The chief difficulty, as we have seen, lies in the word *pioned*, and we had long felt that the solution must be looked for in the local use of the term. We could not but believe that there must be some flower, most probably a water-flower, or one living in marshy ground, that

was provincially known as a peony. In confirmation of this view, we were informed some time since by a clergyman who was for many years incumbent of a parish in the northern part of the county, that peony is the name given in Warwickshire to the marsh marygold. Knowing that he had long resided in the neighbourhood of Stratford, taking an active interest in country life, we asked if there was any wild-flower that the country people called a peony, and he promptly answered there was, and it soon appeared from the description that it must be the marsh marygold. Here was at last a ray of light. And on a little reflection it was not difficult to see why the name of the peony should have been transferred to the marsh marygold. The flowers, though differing in colour, have a remarkable similarity in general growth and shape, especially in the early stage, when the fully-formed bud is ripe for blowing. The buds of both present the unusual appearance of perfectly rounded globes or spheres at the extremity of a thick leafless stalk, the sepals being firmly locked or folded together over the substance of the flower into a bud as round as a marble. Indeed, the helibore, which belongs to the same class, having its sepals tipped with red, might easily be mistaken for a wild peony. In their early stages, moreover, when the peculiar state of the bud naturally attracts attention, the peony and marsh marygold are alike, not only in growth and form, but in colour also. The main point of agreement, however, the globular buds, is so distinctive in the marsh marygold that it has been seized on as a ground of naming the flower, and is embodied in many of its more popular designations. The garden variety, for example, differing hardly at all

from its sister of the marsh, is called the globe flower. In many parts of England, again, marsh marygolds are called *blobs*, or, from the size of the flower, horse-blobs, *blob* being an archaic word for rounded knob; only another form, in fact, of *bleb*, an older term for foam-bell or water-bubble. Thus, water-blobs is a local name for water-lilies, on account of the rounded cup-like shape of the bud. In the same way, the marsh marygold is locally the horse-blob. Clare, the Northampton poet, for example, says:—

"Beneath the shelving banks' retreat
The *horse-blob* swells its golden ball".

The same peculiarity of shape is embodied in the French *bassin*, from the likeness of the flower to a small bowl or basin. Cotgrave makes *bassin* a generic term for the buttercup tribe, including under it the "crow-foot, king-cob, gold-crap, yellow-craw, butter-flower". He adds: "There be many kinds, that which we call bachelor-buttons being one, the double one of them". *Bassin de Marais* is the special term for the marsh marygold; but even in England, from the splendid appearance of the flower, it was sometimes called the brave *bassin*. Thus Lyte, in his *Herbal*, says: "The brave *bassin* or marsh marygold doth grow in most places upon the banks and borders of ditches".

From its dark green leaves and crowded discs of burnished gold the brave *bassin* is one of the most striking and brilliant flowers of early spring, and as such it has been a favourite with the poets, who are minute observers of nature, from Chaucer to Tennyson. Mrs. Loudon, in describing the marsh marygold, says: "This is one of the most showy of the British plants,

and it is also one of the most common, as there are few ponds or slow rivers in Great Britain that have not some of these plants growing on their banks in April and May". And Gerarde, a much more venerable authority, waxes almost eloquent in descanting on its size and beauty: "Marsh marigold hath great broad leaves, somewhat round, smooth, of a gallant greene colour, sleightly indented or purld about the edges, among which rise up thicke fat stalkes, likewise greene, whereupon doe grow goodly yellow flowres, glittering like golde, and like to those of crow-foot, but greater". Parkinson, in his voluminous *Herbal*, says that another name for these flowers is *goulds*; and under this name the flower is used by Chaucer as an emblem of jealousy:—

" And jelousy,
That wered of *yolo guld*es a garland,
And a cuckow sittying on hire hand".

And Gower, probably because the flower expands only in bright sunshine, and is closed or locked in cloudy weather, represents Leucothoe as turned into it by the god of day:—

" But Phebus, for the reverence
Of that she hadde be his love,
Hath wrought through his power above,
That she sprong up out of the molde
Into a flour was named *golde*,
Which stant governed of the sonne".

Of modern poets, Mrs. Loudon quotes one who, in describing a marsh, celebrates its brightest flower under the less familiar classical name:—

" Caltha, in green and gold refulgent towers,
And isles of splendour shine, whose radiance pours
A glory o'er the scene".

Tennyson's line in the "May Queen" is quite familiar:—

"And the wild marsh-marygold shines like fire in swamps and hollows gray".

Again, the marsh marygold is the Lucken Gowan, the locked or folded daisy, of Scotch poetry, celebrated for its beauty by northern writers from Allan Ramsay to Alexander Smith—by the former in the "Gentle Shepherd," and by the latter in one of the most pathetic of his shorter lyrics.

We may be sure, therefore, that the marsh marygold had often caught Shakespeare's eye, and it is exactly the flower which the line we have quoted, viewed in relation to the whole context, requires in order to make the meaning complete. It haunts the watery margins as the constant associate of reeds and rushes, blooms in "spongy April," and, in common with other water-flowers, is twined with sedge "to make cold nymphs chaste crowns". With regard to the form of the word, as found in the First Folio, Shakespeare simply writes it as it was universally pronounced among those who used it. In the midland and western counties, the peony is a great favourite in rustic gardens, and is looked upon as an important element of floral decoration in all rural festivities, especially at Whitsuntide, school-feasts, and club-walkings. And we can certify from personal experience that in these districts the word is pronounced as Shakespeare spells it, pi-o-ny, with a strong emphasis on the first syllable and the full English sound of the vowel, as though it were spelt pye-o-ny.

The other obscure and disputed word of the line, *twilled*, may be disposed of more rapidly. Twills is

given by Halliwell as an older provincial word for reeds, and it was applied like quills to the serried rustling sedges of river reaches and marshy levels. The word is, indeed, still retained in its secondary application, being commercially used to denote the fluted or rib-like effect produced on various fabrics by a kind of ridged or corded weaving. Twilled cloth might equally be described as reeded cloth—cloth channelled or furrowed in a reed-like manner. Twilled is, therefore, the very word to describe the crowded sedges in the shallower reaches of the Avon as it winds round Stratford. It was, indeed, while watching the masses of waving sedge cutting the water-line of the Avon, not far from Stratford Church, that we first felt the peculiar force and significance of the epithet. And, although the season was too far advanced for the reeds to be brightened by the flowers of the marsh marygold, the plant was abundant enough to glorify the banks in the early spring. The whole line, therefore, gives a vivid and truthful picture of what is most characteristic of watery margins at that period of the year.

The next head of illustration is of a miscellaneous kind, including words and phrases left unexplained, or erroneously explained, connected with the manners and customs, the social usages and appliances, of Shakespeare's day. Of these we have collected a considerable number—upwards of thirty indeed. But waning space warns us not to multiply examples, and we must be satisfied with one or two specimens at most. The first is a word that often puzzled us in the earlier days of our acquaintance with Shakespeare, but which, so far as we are aware, the commentators have not noticed. It is the word *tun* occurring in the celebrated scene

between the king and the French ambassadors in "Henry V.," where the latter delivers the "merry message" and the mocking present of the dauphin:—

"*First Amb.* In answer of which claim, the prince our master
Says, that you savour too much of your youth;
And bids you be advis'd, there's naught in France
That can be with a nimble galliard won;
You cannot revel into dukedoms there.
He therefore sends you, meeter for your spirit,
This *tun* of treasure; and, in lieu of this,
Desires you let the dukedoms that you claim
Hear no more of you. This the Dauphin speaks.

"*K. Hen.* What treasure, uncle?

"*Exe.* Tennis-balls, my liege.

"*K. Hen.* We're glad the Dauphin is so pleasant with us;
His present and your pains we thank you for:
When we have match'd our rackets to these balls,
We will, in France, by God's grace, play a set
Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard."

Here the "*tun of treasure*" is evidently brought in and delivered by the ambassador, and the puzzle always was how this could be conveniently or gracefully effected, if *tun* is to be taken in its ordinary sense. The only meaning of *tun* known to our lexicographers is that of a large cask; and how a large cask filled with tennis-balls could be brought by the ambassador and delivered in the king's presence, it is not very easy to see. The difficulty is, however, removed by remembering that *tun*, or in the older spelling *tunne*, had in Shakespeare's day two widely different meanings. While the generic sense in harmony with the etymology is that which holds or contains, still the *tun* denoted vessels of very different sizes and uses. In addition to a large cask containing a certain measure of liquids or

solids, it was applied to a goblet, chalice, or drinking-cup, more commonly a silver-gilt goblet. Thus Minshew, on the English side of his Spanish Dictionary, gives "a *tunne*, or nut to drink in, *cubilête*," which is explained, "a drinking-cup of silver, or such a cup as juglers use to show divers tricks by". In illustration of this we may mention that in an old country town we remember an inn formerly known as "The Three Tuns," which had as its ancient painted sign three gilt goblets exactly like those used by street jugglers.¹ From a passage given by Halliwell, it would seem that *nut* or *nutte* was used like *tun* for a drinking-cup or goblet, which in wealthy houses was commonly of silver or silver-gilt. This sense of the word *tun* is further illustrated by a letter in Hakluyt's *Voyages*, describing an interview which the representatives of an English mercantile company had with the Emperor of Russia in the year 1555:—

"We came before him the tenth day; and, before we came to his presence, we went throw a great chamber, where stood many small *tunnes*, pailles, bowles, and pots of silver, I mean, like washing bowles, all *parcel gilt*; and within that another chamber, wherein sate (I thinke) neere a hundred in cloth of gold; and then into the chamber where his grace sate, and there, I thinke, were more then in the other chamber, also in cloth of gold; and we did our duty, and showed his grace our queene's grace's letters".

The silver tunnes here described were evidently vessels of the same kind as "the parcel-gilt goblet" on which the faithless Falstaff swore, "sitting in the Dolphin-chamber, at the round-table, by a sea-coal fire, upon Wednesday in Wheeson-week," to make Mistress

¹ See also *Carden's Comforte*, p. 8; and Shirley's *Dramatic Works* (Dyce), vol. v. p. 49.

Quickly "my lady" his wife. This distinctive meaning of the word *tun* is, however, so completely forgotten that it does not occur in any of the English dictionaries, old or new, or in any Shakespearian glossary. The only exception we are aware of is that of Mr. Halliwell, who, in his Provincial Dictionary, gives, on the authority of Kennett, "a little cup," as one meaning of *tun*. The word does not, however, occur in the bishop's published Glossary, and we presume, therefore, it must be contained in some manuscript additions that have not yet seen the light. That this is the meaning to be attached to the word as used in "Henry V." is abundantly evident from the older play on which Shakespeare founded his drama, and from which the incident of the tennis-balls is derived. The parallel passage in the "Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth" is as follows:—

"*Archbishop*. And it please your Majesty,
My Lord Prince Dolphin greetes you well,
With this present.

[*He delivereth a tunne of tennis-balles.*]

"*Henry V.* What a *guilded tunne* !

I pray you, my Lord of Yorke, looke what is in it.

"*Yorke*. And it please your Grace,
Here is a carpet and a *tunne* of tennis-balles.

"*Henry V.* A *tunne* of tennis-balles ?

I pray you, good my Lord Archbishop,
What might the meaning thereof be ?

"*Archbishop*. And it please you, my Lord,
A messenger you know ought to keepe close his message,
And specially an ambassador.

"*Henry V.* But I know that you may declare your message
To a king, the law of armes allowes no lesse.

"*Archbishop*. My Lord, hearing of your wildnesse before your
Father's death, sent you this, my good Lord,
Meaning that you are more fitter for a tennis-court
Than a field, and more fitter for a carpet than the campe."

Here the archbishop evidently enters the king's presence, bearing in his hand the gilded tun or chalice filled with tennis-balls, to the number probably of eight or ten, the balls being covered with a square of carpet, and at the royal direction delivers both to the Duke of York. In "Henry V." the ambassadors who take the place of the archbishop deliver the present in the same way to the Duke of Exeter.

The last illustration we have space for is that of the phrase "unbarbed sconce," which occurs in "Coriolanus". Those who are familiar with the drama will remember the scene in which Volumnia, Menenius, and Cominius unite in urging Coriolanus to return and speak the angry populace fair, in order to avert the impending mischief. His mother entreats him to yield for the moment, to curb his pride so far as to address the mutinous crowd, cap in hand, and with bended knee crave pardon for his previous harshness and ask their gentle loves :—

"Enter COMINIUS.

"Com. I've been i' the market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit
You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence: all's in anger.

"Men. Only fair speech.

"Com. I think 'twill serve, if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.

"Vol. He must, and will.—
Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

"Cor. Must I go show them my *unbarb'd sconce*? must I
With my base tongue give to my noble heart
A lie that it must bear? Well, I'll do't:
Yet were there but this single plot to lose,
This mould of Marc'us, they to dust should grind it,
And throw't against the wind.—To the market-place!—
You've put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to the life."

Two main explanations of "unbarb'd sconce" have been given: one by Stevens, to the effect that *unbarbed* means untrimmed, unshaven, to barb a man being a common expression for shaving him; the other by Hawkins, that unbarbed means bare-headed. In support of this, he says pertinently, but vaguely, that "in the times of chivalry, when a horse was fully armed and accoutred for the encounter he was said to be barbed". Curiously enough, of these explanations the latter, and more correct, has been almost unanimously rejected by modern editors and critics. Thus, Mr. Dyce explains unbarbed, "unshorn, untrimmed"; the Cambridge editors give the same meaning, in the Globe edition; while Todd, in his edition of Johnson, Richardson in his Dictionary, and Nares in his Glossary, give unbarbed as unshorn, each quoting the passage in "Coriolanus" as the example. Mr. Staunton, it is true, adopts Hawkins' more correct interpretation, but he does this without a word of explanation or defence. Now, with an erroneous rendering in almost undisputed possession of the ground, this is hardly sufficient. It is necessary to indicate at least the reasons that make the one interpretation right, and the other wrong. It may be stated at the outset that the words "barbed" and "unbarbed" are used both literally and figuratively for shaven and unshorn. But in this speech of Coriolanus the term cannot be interpreted in this sense, as it would then have no real meaning or relevancy at all. So far as mere personal appearance is concerned, Coriolanus had just presented himself in the most public and official manner, both in the Capitol and the Forum, before the senate and the citizens, with the confidence of a proud nature, and the indifference to

mere pouncet-boxes and curling-irons proper to a soldier and a hero. There could thus be no possible reason against his returning on the ground of mere personal appearance. If he really were somewhat rough and unkempt, he would surely, under the circumstances, be the better pleased. Least of all would he think of calling in the barber before presenting himself again to the greasy multitude. The speech obviously refers, not to mere personal appearance, but to the accustomed and accredited signs of deference, humility, and respect. One of these—and that the most eloquently submissive—was uncovering, standing bare-headed, and bowing in a lowly manner to the assembled citizens. This the proud spirit of Coriolanus could not stomach, and he had the greatest difficulty in forcing his stubborn will into even momentary and simulated acquiescence. This was the bitterest element in the partial and mocking ceremony of submission to the citizens he had just gone through. When urged by his friends to speak to the citizens and ask their suffrages, according to established usage, he replies :—

"I do beseech you,
Let me o'erleap that custom ; for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage ; please you
That I may pass this doing ".

Here "stand naked" cannot, of course, be literally taken, though it might be supposed to refer indirectly to showing his wounds. This, however, Coriolanus did not do, and the phrase must be understood as referring primarily to the fact that he was obliged to stand uncovered, bare-headed, before the "bisson mul-

titude". But his gall so rises at the degradation, that while going through the form he cannot help flouting the citizens to their face :—

"*Third Cit.* You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends ; you have not, indeed, loved the common people.

"*Cor.* You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them ; 'tis a condition they account gentle : and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my *hat* than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod."

Again, Volumnia, well knowing what the chief difficulty was, addresses herself most earnestly to this point, detailing to her son in eager gestures the submissive actions by which he must at once seek to regain the popular favour :—

"*Vol.* I prithee now, my son,
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand ;
And thus far having stretch'd it,—here be with them,—
Thy knee bussing the stones,—for in such business
Action is eloquence, and th' eyes of th' ignorant
More learned than their ears,—waving thy head,
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Now humble as the ripest mulberry
That will not hold the handling,—say to them
Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
In asking their good loves ; but thou wilt frame
Thyself forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
As thou hast power and person."

In this excited and intensely dramatic address we see Volumnia pointing to her son's bonnet, and showing by her own action the way in which he should use

it in addressing the citizens. At last, in reply to the reiterated and united entreaties of mother and friends, Coriolanus impatiently exclaims :—

“ Must I go show them my unbarb'd sconce ? ”

It may be easily shown that unbarbed has the meaning which the context thus requires. A war-horse protected by head and chest-pieces of defensive armour was technically said to be *barbed*, *barded*, or *bard*, these being all different forms of the same word derived from the French *barbé*, which Cotgrave renders “barbed or trapped as a great horse”. Thus Holland, in his translation of Xenophon's *Cyropædia*, says: “Now were they all that attended upon Cyrus armed as he was, to wit, in purple tabards, corslets, and head-pieces of brasse, with white crests and with swords: every man also with a javelin of corneil wood. Their horses were *bard*, with frontlets, poictrels, and side-pieces of brasse.” In other words, the horses were protected by head-pieces, breast-pieces, or plates, and side-pieces of defensive armour. The terms *barb* and *barbed*, used in the same way for horse armour, occur continually in Harrington's translation of Ariosto, in Spenser, and generally in the chivalrous poetry of Shakespeare's time, as well as occasionally in his own dramas. But as the war-horse was rarely in this sense fully barbed, the metallic armour largely increasing the weight to be carried, the term *barb* came to be specially associated with the frontlet, or head-piece, which few war-steeds were without. In this way it was also applied, in a secondary sense, to any covering or protection for the head, to a cap or hood, a helmet or bonnet of almost any description. Thus Chaucer uses *barbe* for a

whimble, or a hood and cape covering the head and shoulders; while Skelton applies the same term to a nun's hood, and also to the cap which covered the hawk's head when carried on the fist to the fields before being unhooded at the game. It is, however, more to our present purpose to note that a special form of the word was a well-known term in mediæval times for a military cap, or defensive covering for the head. Thus Ducange gives "*Barbuta*,"—"Tegminis species qua caput tegebant milites seu equites in proeliis". And Sir S. R. Meyrick quotes in illustration of *barbuta* in this sense from Hoscemius, "erant omnes armati cum *barbutis* in capite"; and from Villani, "I tutti armati di corazze e *barbute*, come cavalieri". After giving these examples Sir S. R. Meyrick adds a sentence which is tolerably decisive as to the real meaning of the term in Shakespeare's phrase: "The French call knights thus armed *barbiées*, and the English *barbed*". To show an unbarbed sconce is thus to show an uncovered, unprotected sconce; in other words, to appear bare-headed.

That the word in this connection cannot possibly refer to shaving is evident from the fact that *sconce* means head, and is never applied to the face by Shakespeare or his contemporaries. Of the seven places in which the word occurs in his dramas four are in the "Comedy of Errors," where sconce is played upon in a humorous scene between Antipholus and Dromio of Syracuse. In the second scene of the first act it is synonymous with "pate"; while in the second scene of the second act it is freely punned upon by Dromio after the manner so common with Shakespeare's fools, servants, and clowns:—

"Ant. S. If you will jest with me, know my aspect,
And fashion your demeanour to my looks,
Or I will beat this method on your *sconce*.

"Dro. S. *Sconce* call you it? so you would leave battering, I had rather have it a head: and you use these blows long, I must get a *sconce* for my head, and ensconce it too; or else I shall seek my wit in my shoulders. But, I pray, sir, why am I beaten?"

If our interpretation is correct, the word *sconce* is here used in three different senses: first, for head; second, for a rounded fort or blockhouse; and third, for what protects or covers the head, a cap or hood. This last sense has not been recognised by the commentators, who have interpreted "I must get me a *sconce* for my head" in the sense of fortification. But *sconce* having also the meaning of covering for the head, it is more likely that in playing on the word Dromio would use it in a different sense than that he would repeat it immediately in the same signification. The glossarists do not seem to be aware that *sconce* has this secondary meaning of covering for the head. But that it was really so used is apparent from the following entry in Florio's Dictionary: "Capuccio, a little round hood, or *skonce*, a cap, also a hood or a cowl, a friar's bonnet". The various significations of *sconce* are thus all connected with the central notion of head. It is never applied to the face; and, apart from the necessities of the context, the shaving or unshorn interpretation of the phrase is inadmissible.

Here we must close, having only partially accomplished the task proposed at the outset. Something, however, has been done. Several of the explanations we have offered vindicate on grounds of definite evidence

the text of the First Folio, and we are confident there is still a good deal more to be done in the same direction. We shall hope, therefore, to find some other opportunity of returning to a subject of inexhaustible interest to the genuine lovers of literature.

ENGLISH DICTIONARIES.¹

DR. JOHNSON'S Dictionary was the first attempt at a critical review of the English language, and he is justly considered as the father of English lexicography. The substantial truth of this statement is not affected by the existence in the previous century of such learned works as those of Junius and Skinner. These works are in many respects excellent, showing industry, knowledge, and research, and, considering the state of philology at the time, often surprisingly successful in their main object, that of elucidating the derivation of English words. But they are not, either in form or substance, English dictionaries in the proper meaning of the term. In their general aspect they are rather contributions to European, or at least Teutonic etymology, derived from the special study of one of the Teutonic tongues, and in this respect may be fairly ranked with the works of Wachter, Schilter, and Kilian.


- ¹ 1. *A Dictionary of the English Language*. By ROBERT GORDON LATHAM, M.A., M.D., F.R.S., etc. Founded on that of Dr. Samuel Johnson, as edited by the Rev. H. J. Todd, M.A. With numerous Emendations and Additions. Parts I. to XXIV. London: 1868.
2. *A Dictionary of English Etymology*. By HENSLEIGH WEDGWOOD, M.A., late Fellow of Chr. Coll., Cambridge. 8 vols. London: 1859.
3. *A Glossarial Index to the Printed English Literature of the Thirteenth Century*. By HERBERT COLEBRIDGE. London: 1858.
4. *A Select Glossary of English Words used formerly in Senses different from the Present*. By RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, D.D. Second Edition, revised and improved. London: 1856.

Edinburgh Review, July, 1868.

The mere fact of their being written in Latin sufficiently illustrates their general position as learned works addressed to scholars at large, rather than designed for national or popular use. They are both, moreover, as their titles indicate, occupied exclusively with etymology, and etymology is only one means of illustrating the signification of words, and that not the most authoritative or direct. They no doubt supplied valuable materials to the English lexicographer; and Johnson turned them to good account, having relied, as he tells us, mainly on Skinner for his etymologies. But they are not English dictionaries. The other works claiming this title produced during the former half of the eighteenth century are in reality glossaries of foreign, archaic, and technical terms, or mere vocabularies, lists of words without any definite or detailed illustration of their meaning. This is true not only of Blount and Phillips, Coles and Kersey, but of Bailey, whose well-known *Universal Etymological Dictionary* is, however, a considerable advance on its predecessors, and was avowedly the foundation of Johnson's own work. Though he added largely to the previous vocabularies, almost the only original feature of Bailey's dictionary is the number of proverbs and proverbial sayings scattered through the work, and his explanations of these are not only detailed, but often quaint, ingenious, and amusing. Neither the learned works on etymology, the miscellaneous glossaries of "hard words," nor the popular vocabularies for the use of schools, met the primary requirements of an English lexicon.

Johnson's work is the first dictionary of the language worthy of the name, because he first attempted to make

a complete list of English words sanctioned by literary use, and to explain their meaning, not only by brief definitions, but by copious literary illustrations, by examples of their actual use taken from authors of authority and repute. This last is in fact the cardinal requisite of a good dictionary. Unless it fully illustrates the meaning of words by apt and significant examples of their use, no such work can pretend to any original value or permanent authority as a lexicon of the language. It is in this respect mainly that Johnson's work constitutes an era in the scientific exposition of English words. His etymologies are often unsatisfactory, and almost always second-hand, derived, as he tells us, mainly from Junius and Skinner, eked out by suggestions from scattered and casual correspondents. Many of his definitions are, it is true, excellent, because, though disliking the drudgery of verbal exposition, he applied his mind honestly to the task, and constantly endeavoured, by generalising examples of their use, to exhibit the meaning of the more important words in the shape of a critical description or summary of their contents. But at best this kind of exposition must be imperfect, in many cases only partially developing the central conception of a significant word without attempting to seize or fix its finer shades of meaning. And Johnson confessedly fell short of what might be easily attained in this direction, some of his definitions being gratuitously obscure and almost ludicrously involved, irrelevant, and perplexing. But his literary illustrations are copious and interesting, and this new and invaluable feature, combined with the general current of good sense and critical insight running through his verbal explanations, justly gave to his elaborate review



of the language the value and authority of a standard work.

But a century having elapsed since this really great work appeared, had its execution been even more perfect, it must by this time be in many respects out of date. The mere changes in a living tongue during such an interval would be sufficient to produce this result apart from any special increase in the materials for its scientific elucidation. The last half-century has, however, been a period of extraordinary activity in every department of philological inquiry, and especially in those languages that help to throw most light on the origin and history of our own. The Germans are before us in this as in most other branches of special scholarship. They may almost be said indeed to have elaborated during the interval the new science of comparative philology, and to have exhausted the scientific exposition of those branches of it most directly connected with their own tongue. But the results of their labours after all are not, in our view, so valuable to the English lexicographer as they are generally supposed to be. The abundant materials these foreign scholars have accumulated and arranged for the ready comparison of kindred words in a multitude of cognate tongues, may indeed easily become a hindrance and a snare rather than a help to the English lexicographer. His main business is to elucidate fully the meaning of English words; and the cardinal condition of success in this respect is a thorough and detailed knowledge of the vernacular literature, especially at the critical period when the language attained its majority and assumed its present shape. Apart from this special knowledge, even minute and exact philological scholar-

ship is quite as likely to lead the English critic astray as to guide him aright; and this injurious effect is, as it seems to us, apparent in one of the works at the head of our article, Mr. Wedgwood's "Dictionary of English Etymology". A too exclusive reliance on the suggestions and analogies of comparative philology, combined with a limited knowledge of the native literature, has not unfrequently vitiated his painstaking and in many respects successful attempt to elucidate more fully the sources of our English speech. To one thoroughly conversant with English literature in its rise and progress, as well as during its best periods, comparative philology is of course a valuable help; but, after all, it is in the fuller critical study of our own literature, especially in its early stages, rather than in the labours of foreign scholars, that the true materials for a more scientific and complete exposition of the language are to be found.

Happily these invaluable materials have largely accumulated during the last few years. To say nothing of the accomplished Anglo-Saxon scholars our own country has recently produced, and the light their critical labours have thrown on the earliest forms of our mother tongue, the more useful book societies—such as the Parker, the Camden, and the Percy—have published for the first time, and placed within the reach of students, many extremely rare, valuable, and interesting monuments of our early literature. The Record Commission has done the same, while the most recent organisation for issuing rare and archaic literary works that have hitherto been virtually inaccessible either as manuscripts or books of luxury—the Early English Text Society—is actively at work, and

promises to become more generally useful than any of the older literary clubs or associations. The Saxon and semi-Saxon texts, such as those of Cædmon, the Exeter Book and Layamon's Brut, issued by the Society of Antiquaries, and valuable early works published independently of any society, such as the Ormulum, Wycliffe's Bible, and Tyndale's Testament, have all added to the rich literary stores now accumulated for illustrating the growth and progress of the language. In the presence of these new and multiplied sources of illustration, Johnson's review of the language is philologically far more behind the time than the mere date of its publication would suggest.

These ample materials, accumulated during the last half-century, have hardly yet been turned to any account. Richardson's Dictionary is almost the only original contribution of any special value made to the lexicography of the language since Johnson's day, and it is marked by defects quite as striking as its excellences. The chief merit of the work lies in its full literary illustrations, which were collected by the author with great industry, and arranged with care and intelligence, for the most part in chronological order. Under many of the more important vernacular terms the number and various dates of the illustrative examples constitutes something like a complete history of the term both in form and meaning, and in this respect Richardson's Dictionary is a storehouse of valuable materials to the scientific students of the language and literature. But in most other respects, in its vocabulary, derivations, and explanations, the dictionary is conspicuously meagre, imperfect, and erroneous. Even the historical illustrations might now be largely augmented from the

archaic literary stores that have been opened up, as well as from the standard works both in prose and poetry that have appeared during the last quarter of a century. Todd in his edition of Johnson added largely to the vocabulary and illustrations of the original work, but the additions are often curious rather than useful, and the supplementary labour, though abundant, is wanting in method, order, and scientific insight.

This brings us to the volumes at the head of our article. Of these, the two first, the works of Mr. Wedgwood and Dr. Latham, are not only the most recent contributions towards an improved English lexicography, but in all respects the most valuable. Mr. Wedgwood's is not indeed an English dictionary in the proper sense of the term, but simply, like the works of Junius and Skinner, an etymologicon or dictionary of English etymology. We have already intimated what seems to us a general defect of the work, the relative disproportion between the author's philological and literary knowledge, his much greater familiarity with what may be called the comparative philology of English words than with the various and finer shades of their actual meaning and use. No doubt it may be said in reply that for the professed etymologist philological acquirements are all-important, while a minute and critical acquaintance with the literature is of less account. There is a certain amount of truth in this. But even in tracing the derivation of English words a fine and discriminating knowledge of their use and meaning is essential in order to keep in check the seductive suggestions of comparative philology, as well as to give sobriety, moderation, and fixed limits to etymological research.

When, for example, Mr. Wedgwood refers the common English word "dormouse" to a problematical French "dormeuse," it is impossible not to feel that the superficial analogies of sound and form have triumphed over the fundamental laws of sound etymological inquiry.

"*Dormouse*. The termination *mouse* is probably an instance of false etymology, the real origin being a Fr. *dormeuse*, which cannot, it is true, be cited from the dictionaries, but is rendered probable by the name by which the animal is known in Languedoc, *radourmeire*. In the same dialect, *dourmeire*, a slumberer, sleepy head, equivalent to *dormeuse* (*souris*, a mouse, is feminine) in ordinary French" (vol. i. p. 474).

In the first place, the word does not exist in the French language in the sense attributed to it. Mr. Wedgwood appears to be utterly unconscious that the French name for a dormouse is *un loir*. But apart from this difficulty, the name is of rural origin and use, a household word in the mouths of more than half the rustics of England, and as such is almost certain to be of vernacular origin. It is, in fact, a thoroughly native compound, the first syllable being a generic word in the language to express what is lazy, drowsy, torpid, or inert, from the Anglo-Saxon *dora*, a drone, and giving rise to a verb in two forms, to *dor* or *dare*, to reduce to a torpid or inert state, used especially to denote the effect which bright colours and dazzling spots of light have on certain birds such as larks, and also the numbing power which birds and beasts of prey exert over their victims through the fascination of extreme fear. Mr. Wedgwood has himself pointed out this meaning in his article on the word "dare" (vol. i. p. 437), where he says: "To *dare* birds, to catch them by frightening

with a hawk, mirror, or other means ; to *dor*, to frighten, stupefy ; *dor*, a fool ; so in German *thor*". The fundamental signification of *dare*, as of the parallel form *daze*, is to stun with a loud noise, to stupefy. In actual use, however, *dor* and *dare* are certainly confounded by early writers. Nor is this surprising, as, whatever may be true of their origin, they are undoubtedly closely connected in meaning. Without going fully into this point here, it should be noted that just as *dor* is used both for the cause and the effect, for the humming continuous noise that makes one drowsy as well as for the drowsy state, so the verb *dare* is used intransitively as well as transitively. In the earliest version of Livy,¹ for example, is the following passage referring to the treachery of Philemenus by which the city of Tarentum was taken : "When he came thither [to the gate of the town] he awaked the porter, saying that he had brought a greate boore that he had slayn. At the fyrst call the porter opened the gates ; and fyrst let in two young men of his company ; then entred he, and other his servantes pluckyng in the great boore. At whose greatnesse whyle the keeper was *daryng* and *musynge*, Philemenus sodenly slew hym with his boore speare or hunting staffe." (Inferentes aprum duos juvenes secutus ipse cum expedito venatore, vigilem, incautius miraculo magnitudinis in eos, qui ferebant, versum, venabulo trajicit.) In this passage "daring and musing" mean gazing with fixed look and astonishment of mind, extreme wonder and admiration producing the same physical effect as extreme fear, and the same word therefore being so far appropriately employed to express both. This explains the phrase "*daring* larks," which.

¹ That of Philemon Holland. Fol. 1600.

as well as "*dared* larks," is used by Elizabethan writers in the sense of lying still and gazing fixedly on an object either in wonder or fear. In the same way the hare is said to *dare* or to lie *daring* in her form.

With regard to the noun, half a dozen of our older glossaries, including Kersey and Bailey, give as the meaning of *dor* the drone bee. In composition it is found throughout the south and west of England in the form of *dumbledor*, the name given to the humble bee, but which literally translated into more familiar terms is simply the humming drone. From the drone bee the term was extended to the chafer and beetle tribe, who have a drowsy, humming, droning flight, and lob against the twilight pedestrian in an aimless, lumbering, stupid way; and also in a secondary and metaphorical sense to the lazy and sluggish drones of the social hive. The word is used familiarly by the Elizabethan dramatists in these senses, and earlier still by Sir Thomas More amongst others. One form of the verb occurs in Shakespeare, in Surrey's indignant protest against Wolsey's arrogance:—

" My lords,
Can ye endure to hear this arrogance ?
And from this fellow ? If we live thus tamely,
To be thus jaded by a piece of scarlet,
Farewell nobility ; let his grace go forward,
And *dare* us with his cap like larks."

On this passage Stevens justly observes : " It is well known that the hat of a cardinal is scarlet ; and that one of the methods of *daring* larks was by small mirrors fastened on scarlet cloth, which engaged the attention of these birds while the fowler drew his net over them ". An illustration of the other form of daring

by birds of prey, such as the hawk tribe, over their victims, occurs in "Henry V." in a speech of a French constable on the eve of the battle:—

"Then let the trumpet sound
The tucket-sonance and the note to mount:
For our approach shall so much *dare* the field,
That England shall couch down in fear, and yield".

Of the verb in the other form an example is given by Todd from Hales's *Golden Remains*: "When we are so easily *dorred* and amated with every sophism, it is a certain argument of great defect of inward furniture and worth". The verb "to dor" is explained in some of our old dictionaries "to make dull, stupid," and is used habitually in the sense of "to stupefy". Dor-mouse therefore is simply drone-mouse, the inert, torpid, or sleeping mouse, and the wanting link to illustrate the form of the compound is supplied by Howell and Cotgrave. Howell gives the dor-bee as a synonym for the drone-bee, and Cotgrave has under *baradon*, a drone or dor-bee. As a dor-bee is a drone-bee, so dor-mouse is simply a drone-mouse, all that is further needed to complete the analogy being supplied by Holland, who in his translation of Pliny invariably gives the word "dormouse" in the same way, with a hyphen between the two parts of the compound. Before leaving the word, we may add that Mr. Wedgwood's explanation of *dor*, both noun and verb, is conspicuously meagre and insufficient, and well illustrates our general criticism. While we are taken far afield to Norse, Gaelic, Danish, and Erse for the etymology, the more direct and characteristic sense of the verb, that in which it is used in the above extract, is not given at all. Curiously enough too, in the etymology he has not even mentioned the

Anglo-Saxon word through which undoubtedly it has come to us, whatever may be true with regard to its primitive relationship to cognate forms in other tongues.

Did space allow, other examples of the same defective treatment might easily be given. It would be ungenerous, however, not to recognise the merits of Mr. Wedgwood's learned and most laborious work. It shows throughout a wide range of exact philological knowledge, an easy command of the general principles established in this department of inquiry, together with persevering industry and a considerable amount of successful research into the relationships and affinities of language. The author has, moreover, not only a fine cultivated perception of linguistic affinities, a quick eye and ear for related forms, but a philosophical insight into the various gradations of meaning, the whole process of mental change by which the primitive sense of words gradually passes into their secondary and metaphorical significations. This ready power of following the subtle associations of thought and feeling by which material objects and activities become significant of purely mental states and processes, and the language of sense is transformed into the language of reflection, is of immense service in etymological inquiries, when kept in due check by a constant reference to the facts to be explained. There is, however, a danger in such researches lest generalisation should outrun the materials on which it builds, especially if it is employed in the interest of a theory, and Mr. Wedgwood has not wholly escaped this form of peril. He not only has a theory on the disputed question as to the origin of language, but advocates its claims with

a kind of crusading energy and perseverance. He strongly supports what Professor Max Müller rather irreverently calls the bow-wow theory, his book being avowedly intended as a voluminous illustration of its truth. This zeal on behalf of his favourite theory, if sometimes a help, is quite as often a source of weakness and error. If it sometimes illuminates a group of related words, it quite as often carries its author away from the immediate facts across the whole field of comparative philology, and ends by substituting a conjectured analogy with remote tongues for a plain and straightforward derivation of the word in hand. Illustrations of this, as well as of other slight defects in Mr. Wedgwood's really valuable work, will be given incidentally in the more detailed notice of Dr. Latham's labours. On the whole, while Mr. Wedgwood's work must undoubtedly occupy a high place in scientific etymology, it seems to us more valuable as a contribution to comparative philology based on the study of a particular tongue than as an etymological dictionary of the English language.

Dr. Latham's work is not only an English dictionary in the strict meaning of the term, but in many important respects a very valuable addition to our national lexicography. Though nominally based on Johnson's dictionary, so much of the original text is discarded as imperfect or erroneous, and the additions in every department are so numerous and extensive, that it may be regarded as virtually a new book. Still while thus amplifying and improving the original work until its form can no longer be recognised, Dr. Latham remains faithful in the main to its general spirit and plan, and his new dictionary may fairly be said to possess many

of the characteristic excellences and defects of the old. Where he has occasionally departed from Johnson's plan, as in the capricious introduction of long philological digressions on disputed points of origin, derivation, and meaning, the innovation cannot be regarded as an improvement. But before descending to particular criticism it will be right to notice the general plan of his labours. The vocabulary, or list of words, naturally comes first, and here the new work is an enormous improvement on the old, which was notoriously defective in this important respect. Dr. Johnson's list of words erred both by excess and defect, his columns being crowded with "terms of art," as he calls them—technical terms that had no place in English literature or in the language of ordinary life—while numbers of idiomatic terms and phrases employed by good writers, and having an established historical position, are altogether excluded. It will always, no doubt, be a difficult and disputed point in the lexicography of a living tongue where the exact line should be drawn between admission and exclusion, and if a choice is to be made, what principle of selection should be adopted. Without going to the extreme length of Archbishop Trench and the Philological Society, we should be disposed to take a liberal view on this point. Archbishop Trench and the society he represents would include every word to be found in the literature of the language, the base utterances of notorious word-coiners, as well as the rarer and partially obsolete but sterling issues of the national mint. They would adopt into an English dictionary such words, for example, as the following, all of which, with many more of a like kind, are used by Dr. Henry More in his philosophical

poems : *ain*, nothing ; *anankē*, necessity ; *dizoia*, double-lived ; *apterie*, unwinged ; *phrenition*, anger, fury ; *penia*, want ; *monocordia*, singleheartedness ; *lampropionæa*, the bright side of Providence ; *melampronæa*, the dark side of Providence ; *kattove*, the chief good ; *tagathon*, the good, the excellent ; *psychania*, the land of souls ; and *psittacusa*, land of parrots. This is, we cannot help thinking, a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Philological Society's principle, and indicates the necessity of laying down some rule of selection, however general. In our judgment a dictionary should include all words sanctioned by literary use, and all words that can be proved in any way to exist, whether sanctioned by known literary use or not, belonging to the root elements of the language. With regard to words of foreign origin, literary use would be established by instances of their employment from more than one writer, or even by a single instance from the works of authors of repute not given to verbal eccentricities and innovations. With regard to the vernacular terms, the Saxon and Angle words still living in the provinces, but of which perhaps no instance of actual literary use can at present be given, these are in the strictest sense national property, and ought therefore, in our view, to be gathered into the national storehouse of words, not only as being entitled to a place in the complete inventory of our vernacular wealth, but also for possible future use. Under the designation Angle are included all local words of Scandinavian origin, and several of these during recent years have passed into our current speech. Mr. Tennyson, for example, being a native of Lincolnshire, an Anglian district, has through his writings given currency to several provincial words of

Scandinavian origin. The rule we have laid down will include such a word as *junnoek*, the epithet of hearty approval applied to Mr. Gladstone the other day by his Lancashire audience. This appears to be an old Norse word meaning fair, straightforward, downright, preserved for centuries among the rustics and artisans of Lancashire, with scarcely any alteration of form or meaning. From the south and west of England expressive Saxon terms might be collected which have never yet been registered in any glossary, helping directly to clear up difficulties in the vocabulary of our early literature. The truth is, archaic and provincial English mean very much the same thing, most of the vernacular and expressive terms still living in the provinces having at one time or other found a place in the literature. And the process of recovery and return is continually going on, archaic words being recalled and provincial terms promoted to meet the growing exigencies of our expanding literature and varied public life. It is not too much to say that hundreds of words that were obsolete or provincial a century ago are now in current literary and colloquial use. With regard to these provincial terms, sufficient proof of their existence would perhaps be supplied by the fact of their past registration by competent inquirers, or by satisfactory evidence of their actual use at the present time. We may notice in passing that the want of any provision for collecting and properly sifting words of this class is a marked defect in the plan of a national dictionary laid down by the Philological Society. There must be some limit, however, with regard to date, as well as with regard to the nature and origin of the words to be admitted. We should be disposed to

take a somewhat earlier period than the commencement of the sixteenth century, the time usually fixed upon as that in which the language assumed its present form. Much of Lydgate's writing, for example, is comparatively modern in structure, and may be easily understood without a glossary ; and Chaucer is perhaps more generally read now than at any former period, except in his own day and during the sixteenth century. Allowing, however, the greatest latitude in this respect, it would be impossible to go farther back than about the middle of the fourteenth century, though writers of a much earlier date might of course be usefully quoted to illustrate the more archaic signification of words.

Dr. Latham has not drawn any very sharp chronological line, or laid down any very definite principle as to the admission or exclusion of words. But in practice he gives the widest interpretation to the phrase "English language," his own vocabulary being, in conception at all events, most comprehensive and complete. If he errs at all in this respect, the error is one of excess rather than of defect, as he includes not only the majority of archaic and a large body of provincial terms, but a multitude of cant, slang, and purely colloquial epithets and phrases. To archaic words in particular he allows the widest latitude, some being given, such as *bise*, north wind, a pure French word, supported in English by only a single illustration, dating from the thirteenth century. If any words of this class are omitted, and many of course are, it is not on principle, but simply from oversight or ignorance of their existence. On the whole, however, Dr. Latham has executed this part of his task with commendable

diligence and success. He is, moreover, as friendly to the new as to the old, taking special credit for the introduction of words sanctioned by modern usage, and his list of neologisms is tolerably full. He gives a number of comparatively modern words, such as *linguistics*, *liberticide*, *mobocracy*, *bureaucracy*, *monocracy*, *absolutism*, as well as a number of provincial and revived words and new compounds, such as *flunkey*, *cantankerous*, *kettledrum*, *garotte*, *bosh*, and even *knuckleduster*. Still, as must always be the case, numbers of this class quite as well entitled to a place as those inserted are omitted, such, for example, as *fetish* and *fetichism*, *conative* and *conation*, the former used by Cudworth and the latter habitually by Sir William Hamilton; *astrolatry* and *moralize* as a verb to elevate and purify, opposed to *demoralize*, both used by Mr. J. S. Mill; *centoist*, a compiler, derived from *cento*; and others of comparatively recent introduction, quite as likely to stand their ground as some Dr. Latham has given. He has collected also a considerable number of modern scientific words, such as *homology*, *homologue*, *paletiology*, and *kinematics*, but others equally well entitled to notice, such as *cadaastre* and *cadastral*, *kinetic*, *deontology*, and singularly enough *analogue*, are omitted. The omission of *analogue* is a strange oversight, the word being not only habitually used by the best authors, but employed by Dr. Latham himself in his long dissertation on *contemporary* (p. 544). Other terms belonging to the class of old or revived words with special modern significations, such as *crochet*, ladies' fancy-work, and *croquet*, the out-door game, are in like manner overlooked. There is also a special class of modern words formed from existing words by analogy, or by analogy and

contrast, and constituting in some cases a pair of terms with opposite meanings, that seem to have escaped Dr. Latham's notice. As examples of this class, we may specify *falsism*, used by recent writers, *oldster*, used by Thackeray; *hymnody*, on the analogy of *psalmody*, used by Dean Stanley; *midnoon*, used by Tennyson; *moonset*, used by Browning; *painsworthy*, on the model of *praiseworthy*, used by Mr. Marsh; and *colloquialism*, on the model of *provincialism*. Another class exemplified by the words *organon*, *eirenicon*, *etymologicon*, not specially modern or English in form, but now thoroughly adopted into the language, and used by good writers, is very imperfectly represented, the examples we have given being omitted, while a number of purely foreign and special terms, like *libretto* and *curioso*, are inserted. The omission of these examples is the more surprising as Dr. Latham gives *gnomon*, *catholicon*, and *enchiridion*, Anglicised Greek forms of the same type, but in less general use. In addition to the classes of modern or special words imperfectly represented, or altogether omitted, there are, as we shall presently see, several important archaic or provincial words either overlooked, or imperfectly and even erroneously explained.

On the other hand, there are two classes of words—the one learned and the other lewd, in the earlier meaning of the term—in which, as it appears to us, Dr. Latham errs by excess, his entries being far more numerous than they ought to be in a general dictionary of English. These are technical terms, those restricted to special branches of natural science, such as chemistry, botany, anatomy, and never used in general literature; and those belonging to the vocabulary of low, and what is called fast life, *cant* terms, the dialect of thieves and

cadgers, and purely slang terms, the dialect of sporting life. No doubt words from both these prolific sources occasionally pass into literature, like the word *snob*, for example, as well as into the better language of ordinary life, and in these cases, having risen into respectable society, it is right they should find a place in a directory of the language. There are also peculiar slang meanings of words in established use—such as *fast*, *slow*, *green*, and *muff*, which may fairly be noticed, and Dr. Latham has accordingly included their slang senses in his enumeration of their various significations. But why should *pal* in the slang sense of *companion*, and *lushy* in the sense of *being drunk*, be honoured with special notice? Why again should *header* and *heeltaps* in their slang significations be raised to the dignity of separate entries? And if these are admitted, why should words like *mooning*, in the phrase “mooning about,” and *duffer*, both of which have recently come into current and even literary use, be excluded? The word *duffer* in particular has a special claim to notice, as it occupies a prominent place, not only in the language of ordinary London life, but in the more recondite and mysterious vocabulary of the turf. A few months ago, “a respectable-looking elderly man, known to the police as a ‘duffer,’ was brought before the Lord Mayor for final examination on the charge of attempting to dispose of spurious articles of jewellery by representing them to be made of gold”. This gives us the primary meaning of the word, but there is a secondary or metaphorical sense in which it becomes an epithet of the direst omen and application in sporting circles. This darker and more solemn signification is fully explained by the Earl of Glasgow in a letter to a provincial newspaper, rebutting

some charges that had been brought against him. He says :—

“That part of your correspondent's letter which mentions that I lost five matches in one day at Newcastle, and the statement I am said to have made respecting my income, although both totally untrue, might have been merely laughed at; but when a person is accused of having what is called a ‘duffer’ in his stable, it is more serious. In turf language a duffer means a horse which is by some means made a great favourite by his owner or party, in order that he or they may be enabled to bet against it, and thereby defraud the public, it never being intended that such horse shall be allowed to win. I have thought this explanation necessary.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

“GLASGOW.

“Kelburne, August 9.”

The most serious mistake in the vocabulary of the new dictionary after all is the admission of so many terms of a purely technical character, words wholly restricted to special branches of natural science. Without pausing to enumerate special examples of this class, which may be collected in sufficient abundance from almost any part of the work, we may indicate a general test by which they may be known. This is the absence of any literary illustration in the proper meaning of the term, its place being supplied by an extract from a technical manual of the science to which the word belongs. Now, while an extract from a technical work in support of a technical word may be very proper in a technological dictionary, it is out of place in a general lexicon of the language. If the word belongs to a science with a special and artificial vocabulary like botany and chemistry, and no instance can be given of its use beyond the technicalities of its own science, it has no right to a place in a dictionary of English. It must, however, in fairness be admitted that Dr. Latham's

offences in this respect are not nearly so numerous, or so serious in relation to the vocabulary at large, as those of his predecessor Johnson.

Next to the list of words in a dictionary comes the elucidation of their meaning, and this in general consists of three branches—derivation, definition, and example. In reference to the first, to the etymologies, Dr. Latham, in describing the course he has followed, lays down the true principle of procedure in this important part of a lexicographer's duty. After stating that all conjectural derivations had been swept away, he adds :—

“The editor has refrained from speculation, not only where the origin of the word is unknown, but also where it is uncertain. . . . The first object in ascertaining the derivation of words is to elucidate the history of language, the second is to deduce their meaning from their origin. For both these purposes it is clear that a doubtful etymology is a source of error and confusion.”

Nothing can be sounder in principle than this proscription of conjectural, speculative, and uncertain etymologies. But considering the temptations of the subject, it would perhaps be too much to expect even the most virtuous lexicographer to adhere strictly to his own rule. The columns of a dictionary are not the place for prolix dissertations on doubtful or disputed points of philological inquiry, or for exhibiting in any detail the analytical processes of etymological research. The results of such processes alone should be given in as simple a form as possible. As a work of general guidance and instruction, it should exhibit ascertained and established etymologies in a condensed and intelligible shape, without perplexing the minds of those who refer to it for definite information by vague conjecture and

irrelevant discussion. For this purpose it would, in most cases, be sufficient to refer the English word to the language from which it is immediately derived, and give the form through which it has come, or at most, in cases of doubt and difficulty, the related forms in cognate tongues. This is the course Dr. Latham usually pursues. Rather than encumber his pages with mere conjecture, he has left a considerable number of words without any etymology at all, though some of these might, perhaps, without much difficulty, be referred to well-known roots. For a large proportion of what may be called new and revised derivations he relies on Mr. Wedgwood's labours, either silently adopting his conclusions, or quoting directly from his pages, the quotations often running to a considerable length. This process is indeed carried to excess, the large blocks of miscellaneous philological discussion transferred bodily from Mr. Wedgwood's volumes being often a good deal in the way, and for the general purposes of the dictionary rather an encumbrance than a help. But Mr. Wedgwood is the Skinner of the new work, and, singularly enough, Dr. Latham relies on him so implicitly as to attempt little in the way of original etymological suggestion on his own account. Indeed, considering how well he is equipped by special acquirements for this work, and that he has a decided taste for philological speculation, if not a tendency towards philological caprice, Dr. Latham has contributed surprisingly few etymologies to the main body of the work. But, as if to make amends for his moderation and self-restraint in this respect, he gives the reins to his philological fancies, and airs his favourite linguistic conceits in occasional dissertations, which are, in our view, the

chief blemish of the work. Many of these dissertations are on points of no particular interest—mere crotchets in fact—and the great majority, whether in themselves interesting or not, are altogether out of place in a dictionary. Some of the longest are devoted to minute questions of accent, spelling, and pronunciation, such as the discussions under *connascence*, *contemporary*, *checkers*, *cirrhopod*, and *lamb*. Others are purely grammatical, such as that under *gifted*, or partly grammatical and partly logical, as the long disquisition on *objective* in its grammatical use, and the still longer one on *am* as an active verb, or “copula of present time,” as Dr. Latham calls it, discriminated from *am* the neuter verb to *be* or *exist*. Some again give a detailed history of a favourite word, with a good deal of conjectural etymology, such as those under *bolled*, *brentgoose*, and *brooklet*, while others are occupied with minute questions of ethnological philology, such as the dissertation on *bogy*. Some of these, such as the last, raise points of curiosity and interest, but their proper place is the journal of a special society, not the columns of a dictionary. The dissertations on particles, pronouns, prepositions, and adverbs often run to inordinate length, and come under the same general condemnation. It is right, of course, that a succinct and discriminating account of the various senses in which particles are used should be given; but to devote eight columns to *not*, and five to *but*, shows a defective sense of proportion that must seriously mar the execution of the work. In some cases, indeed, it would seem as though the length of the dissertation were in a kind of inverse ratio to the importance of the question discussed. Upwards of two columns, for example, are devoted to the words *braid*

and *bolter*, each used once by Shakespeare, and not found in the same form and meaning in any other author. This would be almost unpardonable even in a Shakespearian glossary, and it is preposterous in a general dictionary of the language. No doubt the temptation to extended discussion in these cases is great, *braid* in particular being perhaps the most vexed epithet in the whole Shakespearian vocabulary. But it is the business of a lexicographer to resist such a temptation, and to hold himself resolutely to the work in hand. The worst of it is, Dr. Latham sins in this respect with his eyes open. He says under one of the words we have referred to: "What, however, is here written is written more to stimulate and to suggest an etymology than to trace the subject in a purely lexicographical manner". Still, if this kind of miscellaneous and irrelevant discussion must have a place in the work, it is much better that it should be concentrated in special dissertations that may easily be skipped, rather than diffused through the body of the dictionary. It is right, however, to add that, apart from this special feature, the etymologies are, as a rule, given in a simple, direct, and easily intelligible form.

The definition of the meaning of words, the description and explanation of their various significations, is perhaps the least satisfactory part of Dr. Latham's work. Nor is this surprising. Definition is the most delicate and perplexing part of a lexicographer's task, requiring for its successful execution a rare union of varied mental power and special literary acquirements. It is always difficult in a living language to exhibit the different shades of meaning that attach to an expressive word, and the difficulty is of course increased in dealing

with a language so copious as our own. English is peculiarly rich, if not in synonyms which afford no true index of verbal wealth, at least in related terms expressing shades of thought and feeling, evanescent phases of perception and emotion that would escape the notice or elude the grasp of any but the most accomplished and refined verbal interpreter. These remarks apply with special force to the language of imagination and feeling, and it is in this department that the inadequacy of Dr. Latham's explanations is perhaps most apparent. To deal effectively with words of this class requires not only a wide and accurate knowledge of the literature in its highest forms, but some degree of poetical insight and imaginative sympathy, as well as of cultivated literary taste and feeling. Dr. Latham's mind, on the other hand, is of the hard, logical type, prone rather towards dealing with the abstract and formal side of thought and language than with their living relationships and results. He accordingly succeeds best in the interpretation of scientific terms, his definitions and examples in this department being as a rule extremely good. He is less happy in dealing with the language of reflection proper, some of his explanations of philosophical terms being conspicuously meagre, and even inaccurate. Without pausing to give in detail the criticism which would suggest itself to those familiar with such inquiries, we may refer to the words *instinct*, *imagination*, *idea*, and *immanent*, as examples of this defective treatment. The definition of *immanent*, indeed, as "intrinsic, inherent, internal," besides being altogether vague and equally applicable to a score of other words, misses the real and distinctive meaning of the term. It is specially employed to denote mental activities that terminate in the

Night's Dream". In reality the word has no special connection with hay or straw, though we happen to have retained it, and thus to be most familiar with it, in a phrase which suggests this. It means bundle, bunch, or lump of any kind, from the Norman-French *bot*, which Cotgrave defines as "a luncheon or ill-favoured big piece, ill-favouredly round, whence *piéd bot*, a stumpe or club foot"; the old meaning of *luncheon*, like that of the kindred terms *lunch*, *nunch*, *hunch*, being simply a big piece, a collop, or lump. So the French still say a *botte de foin*, meaning a truss or *bottle* of hay. The English word *bottle*, a diminutive in form only, had precisely the same meaning, and was freely used in this generic latitude in Shakespeare's day, as it continues to be provincially, as well as in epithets and phrases still common. This wider meaning is illustrated in the special epithet applied by Shakespeare to Richard III., and explains its peculiar force, which seems hitherto to have escaped the penetration of commentators. Queen Margaret says to Elizabeth :—

"Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my fortune !
 Why strew'st thou sugar on that *bottled* spider,
 Whose deadly web ensnareth thee about ?
 Fool, fool ! thou whett'st a knife to kill thyself.
 The day will come that thou shalt wish for me
 To help thee curse that poisonous bunch-back'd toad."

And at a later period, the prediction being verified, Queen Elizabeth repeats the bitterly descriptive phrase :—

"O thou didst prophesy the time would come
 That I should wish for thee to help me curse
 That *bottled* spider, that foul bunch-back'd toad".

The epithet puzzled the early commentators, one

moisture; and in this sense it is one of the poetical epithets to describe the vigorous and succulent shoots of the early spring. This might easily have been learnt from the use of the epithet by modern poets, and especially by Keats, who is fond of it, and whose intimate acquaintance with the Elizabethan writers makes him a perfect interpreter of their language. A single instance from Keats will suffice to bring out the real meaning of the word :—

“ And as the year
Grows *lush* in juicy stalks, I'll smoothly steer
My little boat, for many quiet hours,
With streams that deepen freshly into bowers ”.

Provincially the word is applied to ground moistened by recent rain, and thus easily turned ; and its primitive poetical meaning is, of course, the basis of the secondary slang applications *lush* and *lushy* to states in which the vital clay is moistened and the body filled with vinous or fermented sap.

Or to take another Shakespearian word in which Dr. Latham claims to have made a special improvement, *bottle*, a bunch or bundle, as in the phrase “ bottle of hay ”. In dealing with this word, Dr. Latham places it under a separate heading and gives it a new spelling, *bottel*, partly, as he says, to mark the difference of meaning from bottle, a hollow vessel for holding liquor, and partly for the sake of indicating the derivation. The new form, though scarcely an improvement, may perhaps be defended on the ground of ancient usage, of which, however, Dr. Latham himself is ignorant. But the main point is that, after taking so much pains with the word, he still defines it “ a bundle of grass, hay, or straw,” according to its special use in the “ Midsummer

a few years before he came to London, and with which he was familiar, we find "bottles of flesh" given as a synonym for great wens in the throat—the Italian word *gozzuti* being glossed in the margin as follows: "men in the mountaynes with great *bottels* of flesh under their chin through the drinking of snow water". We still retain this meaning of the word in a number of phrases and epithets, such as bottlenose, a big or bunchy nose; bottlehead, provincial for great, thick, or blockhead; and, not to multiply examples, in the bluebottle fly, which is literally the bunchy or unwieldy blue fly.

Other examples of defective explanations occur under the words *deer*, *dare*, *brat*, *faggot*, *kex*, *convent*, and *kink*, the last having indeed no explanation at all beyond a short extract, which gives the more limited and technical meaning of the word. *Deer* is restricted to its modern sense—to the class of animals, that is, yielding venison; while in its earlier use in the literature it is a generic term for wild animals of every description. Caxton, for example, makes Bruin, after Reynard's trick had cost him his ears and forepaws, speak of the fox as "that fell dere," or, in other words, that cruel beast. And this generic sense, which lasted at least for a century longer, is represented by the fragment of an old song quoted by Shakespeare in "Lear":—

"For rats and mice, and such small *deer*,
Have been Tom's food for many a year".

The generic meaning of *dare* has already been explained, and may be compared with the narrow interpretation of Johnson, which Dr. Latham retains. Under *brat* he only gives the secondary and contemptuous sense of child, referring to the primitive meaning only

to question its existence. He says: "According to Mr. Wedgwood, the original meaning of the word was *rag*, *bundle of rags*; the Anglo-Saxon *brat*, and Welsh and Gaelic *brat*, having that meaning. On the other hand, it may be connected with *breed*." Rag or clout is, however, not only the primitive meaning, but the sense in which it is used by Elizabethan writers. Thus Churchyard, eulogising the merits of Cardan's *Treatise on Consolation*, says:—

"The beggar that bedeckt in *brats* and patched rotten rags
In budget if he bear this book would scorn the roysterous brags".

Faggot, again, is defined "a bundle of sticks"; but though usually applied to sticks, it means simply a bundle, and Udall accordingly speaks of "golde alreadie fyned and made in *fagottes* or plate". With regard to the word *kex*, Dr. Latham, after especially discussing its etymology and speculating as to what particular plant it denotes, concludes by defining it "umbelliferous plant so called". This is worse than no definition at all, as it not only suggests what is false, but suppresses the true and distinctive meaning of an expressive word in common use with many of our best poets. In the first place, *kex* does not designate any peculiar plant, but is a generic name for the whole class of tall umbelliferous annuals with hollow reed-like stalks, such as angelica and hemlock. And, in the second place, it designates these plants not in their green and summer beauty, but in their winter state as bleached and withered stems in the leafless hedges, fit only to feed the crackling blaze of a rustic ingle. Hence the common proverb "as dry as a *kex*," and the use of the term amongst the Elizabethan dramatists to designate what is withered, sapless,

and old. Though it constantly carries with it this notion of what is dry and fit for fuel, the generic meaning of the term is that of hollow stalks. Thus Holland in his translation of Pliny, referring to the silkworm's cocoon, says: "It is spun into a small thread with a spindle made of some light *kex* or reed". In this sense it is applied not only to the larger umbelliferous plants, but also to the elder tree from the hollowness of its stem. Thus Cotgrave gives *canon de suls*, a *kex* or elder stick; and, though the use is comparatively rare, it must be in this sense that the word is employed by Tennyson in the "Princess":—

" Let the past be past : let be
 Their cancell'd Babels ; though the rough *kex* break
 The starred mosaic, and the wild goat hang
 Upon the shaft, and the wild fig-tree split
 Their monstrous idols, care not while we hear
 A trumpet in the distance pealing news
 Of better, and Hope, a poisoning eagle, burns
 Above the unrisen morrow".

The word *convent*, again, is restricted to its later and secondary meaning, being defined "assembly of religious persons, body of monks or nuns". But in Shakespeare's day the word was used generically for an assembly of any kind. Thus in the early version of Ælian the translator, rendering the author's glowing description of the Vale of Tempe, and referring especially to the shaded banks of the Peneus, says: "The people bordering and inhabiting thereabouts make their accustomed *convents*, their usual assemblies, and sumptuous bankets in those pleasant places". And again in the seventh book, referring to Demosthenes,

we have: "He consumed the whole night season in meditating and committing to the tables of remembrance such matters as he was to publish in the common *convent*, and assembly of the Athenians". This early meaning of the word escaped the industry and research of Richardson, and has not as yet been noticed we believe by any English lexicographer. It is, however, of some importance in connection with the verb *convent*, to summon before a court or judge, to call together, to assemble, in common use amongst the Elizabethan writers, and employed four or five times by Shakespeare himself. The verb is used intransitively as well as transitively, though only in the latter sense by Shakespeare. In the passage in "King John," where alone it has an intransitive meaning—

"So by a roaring tempest on the flood,
A whole armado of *convented* sail
Is scatter'd and disjoined from fellowship,"

convented is a conjectural emendation of Mason in place of *convicted*, the reading of the First Folio, which had been changed by Pope less happily perhaps into *collected*. Dr. Latham indeed illustrates the intransitive verb by a quotation from the "Noble Kinsmen," which if a real example would conflict with the statement as to Shakespeare's use of the active or transitive form only, at least if we agree with the best critics, such as Coleridge and Dyce, in attributing to Shakespeare a considerable portion of the play, including the first act, from which the passage is taken. But the quotation is a mistake, as any one who reads the whole speech and the context will at once perceive, *convent* being

used there, as uniformly by Shakespeare,¹ in the active and not in the neuter sense as Dr. Latham imagines. Beaumont and Fletcher, however, use the verb intransitively, and the fact that in the first act of the "Noble Kinsmen," where it occurs twice, it is used in the transitive sense, which is habitual with Shakespeare, is a slight incident confirming the view that this part of the play is really his work. The English noun *convent*, in its classical sense of a meeting or assembly, festive or judicial, which Dr. Latham in common with his predecessors has overlooked, is, it need scarcely be said, connected with both forms of the verb, and explains this use of it by writers of the Elizabethan period.

The only meaning assigned to the word *kink*, in the extract Dr. Latham gives, is that of a twist in a rope; but the noun exists in the generic sense of a twist, bend, knot, or curl of any kind, in a rope or in a gnarled stump; and the verb is of equal latitude, "to kink the hair" being locally used, for example, instead of to curl or wave the hair.

Before leaving the general head of defective explanation or description, we may notice in passing Dr. Latham's reference of the less common words to particular classes, as obsolete, provincial, rare, or colloquial. From a limited knowledge of our early literature, as

¹ The passage in "Coriolanus"—

"We are *convented*
Upon a pleasing treaty; and have hearts
Inclinable to honour and advance
The theme of our assembly,"

is ambiguous, admitting of either interpretation, we are summoned, called together, or we are assembled, but Mr. Dyce is most probably right in giving the verb here as usual the active meaning.

well as a defective acquaintance with modern poets, these references are often inaccurate. *Nonce*, for example, in the phrase "for the nonce," is described as obsolete, though it is constantly employed by living writers, and has in fact never fallen out of literary use. The verb *counterchange*, again, is described as rare, only one instance of its use being given, and that more than 200 years old. But the verb is familiarly employed by Tennyson in picturing the living play of sunlight through a screen of leaves. In "In Memoriam" we have, for example :—

" Witch-elms that *counterchange* the floor
Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright".

And again in the "Recollections of the Arabian Nights":—

" A sudden splendour from behind
Flush'd all the leaves with rich gold-green,
And, flowing rapidly between
Their interspaces, *counterchanged*
The level lake with diamond-plots".

In the same way *frequency* in the sense of a crowd, entered as rare with only a single example of its use from Bishop Hall, is also to be found in Tennyson. Again, the verb *daff*, to throw off or baffle, the adjective *dædal*, and the nouns *genitor* and *bibber*, described as rare, and illustrated exclusively from old writers, are all used by Keats. Far stranger than any of these, however, is the entry of the word *lush* as obsolete. We have already given one instance of its use from Keats, but it occurs no less than six times in his poems, and is to be found still more frequently in the *Songs and Ballads* of Gerald Massey, to say nothing of its use by other poets and prose writers of the present day.

But perhaps the most singular mistake is that which Dr. Latham falls into in dealing with the verb *gar*, to do or make, still habitually used in Lowland Scotch. While copying from Todd a single example of its use in Spenser's "Shepherd's Calender," he goes on to suggest, not that it is obsolete or rare or local, but that the example is probably unique—that in fact the word does not exist in English, even provincially. The truth is that the verb, though of Scandinavian origin, is common to the literature of the two countries for centuries, and is found in English writers from Chaucer to Skelton, from Skelton to Golding and Warner, and down at least to the close of the Elizabethan era.

In advancing from the meaning of words to the examples of their use, we pass at once from the least to the most satisfactory part of Dr. Latham's work. Johnson's Dictionary gained its high reputation mainly from the apt and varied quotations from writers of repute that illuminated the vocabulary, and in this respect the new work is worthy of the original. Dr. Latham has evidently read with care and diligence a large proportion of the best modern authors, and his new literary illustrations embrace almost every name of any eminence in letters for the last half-century. He has read moreover with a special eye to his lexicographical labours, and the quotations are thus in many cases peculiarly happy. Dr. Johnson, describing his own plan, lays down an important principle on this head, which his new editor has endeavoured, to some extent at least, to carry into practice. Johnson says: "When first I collected these authorities, I was desirous that every quotation should be useful to some other end than the illustration of a word: I therefore

extracted from philosophers principles of science ; from historians remarkable facts ; from chymists complete processes ; from divines striking exhortations ; and from poets beautiful descriptions ". Dr. Latham has carried out this excellent plan in the parts of his work relating especially to science and history, to political and mental philosophy. With the modern poets he is less familiar, and does not seem to have read them with any attention, if indeed he has read them at all. The novelists have fared better at his hands, and he quotes freely from the best and most popular, such as Scott and Bulwer, Thackeray and George Eliot, Dickens and Trollope, as well as from several of by no means equal name or standing. Some of these last, instead of being any authority on questions affecting the purity of the English language, have, indeed, actively contributed to its degradation ; and the fact of their having used a barbarous or new-fangled word gives it no claim whatever to be considered as English. Dr. Latham also quotes from a number of our recent essayists and miscellaneous writers, such as Lamb, Coleridge and Southey, Mackintosh and Sydney Smith, Whately, Carlyle, and J. H. Newman. Our best modern historians, such as Hallam, Macaulay, Milman, and Thirlwall, are also turned to good account. Under important terms connected with constitutional history the quotations from Hallam, for example, are numerous and instructive. The same may be said of the more important terms in science and philosophy illustrated from the writings of Bentham and Dugald Stewart, Hamilton and Mill, Herschel and Whewell, Owen and Herbert Spencer, Lyell and Darwin. This makes the dictionary a book not only of words but of ideas, not

only of names but of things, not only of verbal information but of real knowledge. It is almost impossible to consult it with any care or constancy without gaining instruction of some sort, often of an interesting and valuable kind. A story is told of a patient student who steadily read through Johnson's Dictionary in the folio form, and being asked at the close how he liked it, replied that he found the work extremely interesting, but rather unconnected. The judgment of being very interesting may fairly be pronounced on much of Dr. Latham's illustrative matter—many of his extracts throwing light on recent discoveries and inventions as well as on the progress of science and the general movement of scientific thought in our day. The extent to which a dictionary accomplishes this double end of unfolding thoughts as well as words is indeed a very fair index of its real merit and permanent value. For there cannot be a greater mistake than to suppose that a mere knowledge of language or languages makes an educated man, apart from a living interest in the whole organisation of knowledge and the progress of enlarged intellectual or moral conceptions which it is the main office of language to embody and reveal. The dictum of Milton on this head is not only true, but especially to be kept in mind in connection with linguistic inquiries, lest they should degenerate into a mere study of words and forms and rules apart from their vitalising relation to the realities of thought and life. "Though a linguist," says Milton, "should pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into, yet if he had not studied the solid things in them, as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man as any yeoman or

tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only."

To have in a dictionary examples embodying "remarkable facts" and "principles of science" is therefore in itself a great advantage. But it is accompanied by an incidental drawback, which ought to be noticed, as it is directly connected with the chief and most striking defect in this portion of Dr. Latham's work. He is at times so interested in the subject of the extract that he allows it to run to inordinate length, and in these cases, while the illustrative matter may occupy a considerable space, the examples of the word's actual use are extremely few. The great defect in this part of the dictionary is indeed that the literary illustrations are too few, and that they are not arranged in chronological order. In very few cases are the examples sufficiently numerous or sufficiently well arranged to give anything like a history of the word, which is after all the main thing to be aimed at in a connected series of literary examples. We are aware that to have done this even partially must have largely increased the bulk of the work. But it is impossible not to feel that in Dr. Latham's case there are other and more serious difficulties in the way of its accomplishment. It is clear from internal evidence that he lacks the wide and minute acquaintance with the early literature which is the essential condition of success in undertaking such a task. While he has obviously read some curious books connected with the Elizabethan period, it is equally clear that his general knowledge of the literature belonging to that great and important period is extremely partial and imperfect. But remembering the extent of that literature, and that after all it is only

one of several periods whose productions the ideally perfect lexicographer ought to have at his finger-ends, we may well ask, who is sufficient for these things? What Dr. Latham has failed to effect, has indeed not even ventured to attempt, no single labourer could accomplish. It could only be thoroughly done by an organisation of skilled labour such as that proposed by the Philological Society. But an extensive plan of that kind requires an extended time for its execution, and years must still elapse before it can be successfully carried into effect. Meanwhile it is matter of congratulation that we have already so far advanced, and now approaching completion, a dictionary with so many undoubted merits, and on the whole so good and useful, as that of Dr. Latham.

Having now briefly noticed the general plan and execution of Dr. Latham's work, we may conclude with a special analysis of a few of the words either overlooked or imperfectly explained both by Mr. Wedgwood and Dr. Latham. Amongst a number of examples that might be given, we select two or three whose fuller exposition will be a contribution, however slight, to the lexicography of the language. We begin with a specimen of words in common use, that have been actually or virtually overlooked by all our standard lexicographers, including the most recent. Dr. Latham may perhaps be surprised to hear that there are at least a dozen words in Mr. Tennyson's poems that find no place in his dictionary; but this is the case; and if modern poets generally were taken, we believe the number might be multiplied tenfold. Take for example the first verse of Mr. Tennyson's recent poem the "Victim":—

"A plague upon the people fell.
A famine after laid them low,
Then thorpe and *byre* arose in fire,
For on them brake the sudden foe ;
So thick they died the people cried
'The gods are moved against the land,'
The priest in horror about his altar
To Thor and Odin lifted a hand."

Neither Dr. Latham nor Mr. Wedgwood has the word *byre*, though it is not only in common use both in prose and poetry, but a particularly interesting word to the etymologist. It is used in Scotland and the north of England for the outbuildings of a farmhouse where the cattle are kept, and especially for a cow-house. Its use in this sense is seen in the northern proverb "drive a cow to the hall, and she will run to the *byre*". The word with the same signification has also a place in our early literature, and is given in several of the older dictionaries, such as those of Kersey, Philips, and Ash, the last, being latest in date, entering it as obsolete. The word itself, there can be little doubt, is the Scandinavian *byr*, a village or town, from the verb *by*, to settle down, dwell in the country, till the soil. The word appears in the Swedish and Danish *by*, a hamlet, village, or town, and in the English *by*, as a final syllable in the names of places throughout Lincolnshire and the adjacent counties, specially subjected to Scandinavian occupation and influence. Grimsby, for example, is simply Grim's town, and the name so far supports the notion that the wonderful romance of "Havelok the Dane" has a real historical basis, Grim according to the story being the foster-father of the castaway prince Havelok. Though of Scandinavian origin, *byre* is, however, connected with

the Anglo-Saxon *bye*, a dwelling or homestead, from *byan* or *buan*, to inhabit, cultivate, till, and reappears as an English compound in *by-law*, local or town law, and probably also in *by-word*, local scandal or town talk. That the Scottish *byre*, though now locally designating simply a cattle-shed, originally meant a dwelling, and is thus really the same word in origin and meaning as the English *by*, is apparent from the Scottish *byr-law*, a local or private law, made by agreement between neighbours, which, though slightly differing in meaning, is the answering northern term to the English *by-law*. Before leaving the word it is worth noticing that the Anglican *by*, in names of places, exactly corresponds to the Saxon *ton*, or town, from *tynan*, to enclose; and that the word town, or *toon* (as it is pronounced), is still habitually used in the North for a country homestead, the circle or enclosure of the farm buildings, including house and yard. We have thus in the terms *byre* and *town* the primitive unit, the central element as it were, of the most complex and expanded borough and town.

We may take another illustration of a neglected word from Mr. Tennyson. The following lines occur in his delightful poem of the "Brook":—

" But Philip chattered more than brook or bird ;
 Old Philip ; all about the field you caught
 His weary day-long chirping, like the dry
 High-elbow'd *grigs* that leap in summer grass ".

Dr. Latham has not given the word *grig* used in these lines at all, and Mr. Wedgwood missed it in the text of his work, but, struck apparently by its use in the poem, found a place for it in the supplement, without, however,

giving any very accurate information as to its origin and use. With regard to use he says that "the word is only known in ordinary speech in the proverb 'merry as a grig'"; but the fact is that it is widely known throughout the country in the precise sense of cricket or grasshopper, but especially the former. We tested this orally some years ago, and found that in a number of counties the word is popularly known in this sense. But it has also the same signification in literature not only in Tennyson's lines, which Mr. Wedgwood appears to regard as unique in this respect, but in the pages of other authors. The early editions of Mr. Tennyson's poems, for example, contained a short poem on the grasshopper, which was withdrawn from the later editions; and Professor Wilson, in a lively review of Tennyson, characterises the poem as follows: "As for the grasshopper, Alfred, in that green *grig*, is for a while merry as a cricket, and chirps and chirrups, though with less meaning and more monotony than that hearth-loving insect, who is never so happy, you know, as when in the neighbourhood of a baker's oven".

But the remarkable fact is that although thus widely known and used in a specific sense, both colloquially and in literature, the word has never yet found its way into any English dictionary. The word *grig* appears indeed in our dictionaries, but only in the sense of "a small eel," which is, however, an extremely limited and local meaning compared with the wide and general prevalence of the "high-elbowed" interpretation. In the proverb "merry as a *grig*," where it obviously means cricket, the word is usually referred to the eel, or explained as meaning *Greek*, and Dr. Latham supports these venerable traditions. So much for the use of the

word. Mr. Wedgwood's account of its origin is still less satisfactory. He says, "*Grig*, like the first syllable of *cricket*, represents the creaking sound of the chirp," which simply shows how conveniently a favourite theory may supply the place of special investigation and accurate knowledge. The word has really nothing to do with the sound the cricket makes, but is derived from the colour of its coat. It is of Anglo-Saxon origin, and occurs in one of the earliest and most vigorous fragments of Anglo-Saxon poetry we possess, the "Fight at Finnesburg," which begins as follows with "a speech of Fin, a Frisian prince, on seeing a glare of light in his palace, which had been fired by the Danish invaders in a night attack":—

"Hleothrode tha	"Cried aloud then
Heatho-geong cyning :	The warlike young king :
Ne this ne dagath éastan,	This dawns not from the east,
Ne her draca ne fleogeth,	Nor flies a dragon here,
Ne her thisse healle	Nor of this hall here
Horn naes ne byrnath	Are the cressets burning ;
Ac her forth bernth ;	But here it burns forth ;
Fugelas singath,	The birds sing,
Gylleth <i>græg-hama</i>	The cricket chirps,
Guthw-udu hlynneth,	The war-wood resounds,
Scyld scefte oncwylth "	Shield to shafts responds "

Here we have the early form of the word *græg-hama*, the grey-skin or grey-coated one, the final *g* having been retained instead of being changed into *y*, as in *dæg*, day ; *hæg*, hay ; and the great majority of similar cases. The second part of the compound *hama*, a coat or skin, which has fallen out of use, may probably still be found in *hammer*-cloth, formerly a skin thrown over a coach-box ; and in yellow-*hammer*, a yellow-coated bird. It

will be seen that the word originally applied to the cricket: the grey-coated one in the extract, roused by the sudden warmth and blaze, chirps in the accustomed hall newly fired by the Danish invaders. But it would very naturally come to be applied to the grasshopper as well as to the cricket. Colour, it need scarcely be said, was, in early times, a constant ground of naming not only insects, but birds, beasts, and fishes, and this particular colour affords examples of each in the grey or badger, the grey linnet, the grayling, also celebrated in the "Brook," the "grey fly" of Milton, and the "grey-coated gnat" in Shakespeare's wonderful description of Queen Mab's equipage. Shakespeare's epithet is indeed an exact translation of the old Anglo-Saxon name for the cricket.

Before leaving Tennyson, we may notice in passing one or two of the many remaining words and compounds in his poems not to be found in Dr. Latham's Dictionary. In the "Princess," the hero, describing his journey, says:—

" Then we crost
To a livelier land ; and so by tilth and grange,
And vines, and blowing *bosks* of wilderness,
We gained the mother-city thick with towers".

And in the "Dream of Fair Women" it is said of Jephthah's daughter, that after her impassioned speech:—

" She lock'd her lips ; she left me where I stood :
' Glory to God ' she sang, and past afar,
Thridding the sombre *boscage* of the wood,
Towards the morning star".

Dr. Latham has *bosky* the adjective, but not the noun *bosk* and *boscage*, meaning respectively wood and under-

wood, occurring in these extracts. Again, in the description of the Ladies' College and its course of lectures we have :—

“ ——— followed then

A classic lecture, rich in sentiment,
With scraps of thundrons epic *lilted* out
By violet-hooded doctors ; elegies
And quoted odes, and jewels five words long,
That on the stretch'd forefinger of all time
Sparkle for ever ”.

But *lilt*, though a most expressive word, and in common use amongst recent writers of high reputation, is not given by Dr. Latham.

We now turn to a word which, though long known to professional men in its technical application, has only recently come into general use. It is at present, however, so habitually employed both in speech and writing that it could hardly be dispensed with. This is the word *gist*, of whose origin and precise meaning we should naturally expect Mr. Wedgwood to give some account, especially as Archbishop Trench had pointedly asked for information on the subject. Dr. Trench says of the word: “This is the old French ‘gite,’ from the old ‘gesir,’ and meant, as does the French word still, the place where one lodges for the night. But where is the point of contact and connection between ‘gist’ in this sense, and ‘gist’ as we use it now?” We might fairly look to Dr. Latham and Mr. Wedgwood for an answer to this question, but neither of them has anything to say on the matter. Mr. Wedgwood does not notice the word at all, and curiously enough the only example of its use in the modern sense given by Dr. Latham is from Mr.

Wedgwood's own writings. Archbishop Trench's question may, however, soon be answered, the link he asks for being supplied by the technical meaning of the term. *Gist* is one of the old Norman French law terms which has passed by a very natural process from its legal use into the language of common life. In its legal sense it means foundation, *gist of action* in legal phraseology being simply ground of action; or in the words of the old definition, "the cause for which an action lieth, the ground and foundation thereof, without which it is not maintainable". It is used habitually in this sense by professional writers, and in the standard law reports. Thus Burrow, in his report of a case arising out of the seizure and sale of a bankrupt's goods by the sheriff, says, "The *gist* of an action of trover is the conversion, the finding is not the material part," where *gist* is a synonym for material part; and further, in the same case, "The *gist* of this action is the wrongful conversion by the sale". And again in a nuisance case of special interest to the lexicographer, as it turns very much on the exact meaning of the words *noxious* and *noisome*, we have "Hurtfulness is the *gist* of this indictment". From its more limited technical employment the word was brought into general use by great lawyers and writers on the philosophy of law such as Burke and Mackintosh. In its legal meaning, therefore, *gist* is simply the ground on which an argument rests, the basis that supports it, the point on which it turns: and this is precisely the signification in which it is now generally employed. There is no difficulty whatever therefore in tracing "the point of contact and connection" between *gist* in its old sense of a lodging-place, and *gist* in its modern sense as the material ground and

basis of an argument. Dr. Latham misses the exact meaning of the word altogether. After giving the old sense of lodging-place, he adds "point to arrive at, object, this being the only current meaning at present". In place of being "the only current meaning at present," this is, however, a meaning the word never had at any time, early or late. Instead of being the "point to arrive at, object," it is, as we have seen, the ground on which you rest, the real basis of fact or argument that supports a reasoning or proves a case. In his account of the word, Dr. Trench overlooked the old French form *giste*, nearest to our own, and through which it has come to us, as well as the older English words *agist* and *agistment* derived from it. *Giste* was, however, in common use in French not only as a legal but as a general term, and Cotgrave explains it "a bed, couch, lodging, place to lie in, or to rest in"; *droict de giste* being the king's right of lodging at the house of any vassal or subject. *Agist* and *agistment*, again, applied originally to the open places where the deer congregate and lie in the spring, meant, "in our common law, to take in and feed the cattle of strangers in the king's forest, and to guard the money due for the same to the king's use"; and Cotgrave gives under *glandage* "mast, the feeding of hogs by mast in woods; the *agistment*, or laying of swine into mastie woods"; and also under *glandager* "to *agist*, or lay swine in mastie woods". Archbishop Trench has also overlooked the older form of the French verb which explains that of the noun. Richelet gives as an archaic third person of the verb *gésir* or *gir*, the form *gist*, pronounced *git*, which gradually took its place, *il git* being used instead of *il gist* for

he rests or lies.¹ *Ci git* had thus exactly the same meaning as *hic jacet*, and is habitually used in this sense in the older French epitaphs. The epitaph on Richelieu, by the poet Benserade, who lost his pension by the cardinal's death, illustrates this use on its humorous side:—

“Ci gît, oui gît, par la morbleu,
Le Cardinal de Richelieu,
Et ce qui cause mon ennui,
Ma pension gît avec lui”.

Git was, however, used as an impersonal verb in the sense of *consistit*, it consists in, depends or rests upon, *il consiste* (tout *git* en cela), and this use of the French verb exactly harmonises with the current meaning of the English noun.

Amongst the more archaic but expressive terms Dr. Latham has omitted to explain, is the good old English word *charm* or *chirm*, meaning murmuring voices, mixed and multiplied sounds, confused but animated cries or noises of any kind. The word is used amongst others by Peele in his *Arraignment of Paris*—“A *charm* of birds, and more than ordinary;” and also by Milton in the same sense:—

“Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet
With *charm* of earliest birds”.

In Scotch poetry ancient and modern, as well as in the North generally, the word is habitually used in the same sense to express the various notes of congregated birds, and especially in its earlier use notes of a plaintive, mournful, wailing strain. Jamieson says, referring

¹ As might naturally be expected, the early form is found in our Anglo-Norman records and law books, and Kelham in his dictionary accordingly gives “*gi gist*, who is buried, who lies”.

to its early use: "As applied to birds it denotes the mournful sound emitted by them, especially when collected together before a storm". But he also gives examples of its use in a more general sense, without any suggestion of a plaintive note or tone. In England the word exists locally over a very considerable area, to express associated vital sounds, cries, voices, songs, or notes of any kind. "In some of the midland counties," says Mr. Keightly, "charm signifies a loud confused sound made by a number of birds, cattle, or children;" and in the South and West of England it is used generically to express a murmuring or confused noise, loud or low. Last summer, for example, in conversation with a gentleman from the West of England we heard the word used in this sense,—precisely the sense it bears in our early literature. Being at Westminster, in the neighbourhood of the Broadway, he had strolled out one Saturday evening to see the busy market of that crowded thoroughfare, and in describing the scene he said: "What a place that Broadway is, such a moving crowd of people, and what a *charm* they keep up!" But this really expresses the exact literary use of the word amongst the Elizabethan writers. In the volume already referred to as one of Shakespeare's library, the following example of its use occurs: "He himself began to speake; and then was there heard a great scraping of feet in the floore, with a *cherne* of loud speaking, and upon that, every man turning himself about, saw at the chamber-doore appeare a light of torches, and by and by [immediately, that is] after entered in the Lorde Generall with a greate and noble traine". With regard to the origin of the word, it has no direct connection with *carmen*, to which it is usually

referred, but is simply the Anglo-Saxon *cirm* or *ceorm*, a noise, shout, cry, or uproar, connected directly with *ceorian*, to murmur, and indirectly, through the tendency of multiplied and continuous sounds to assume a kind of rhythmical cadence when heard at a little distance, with *cyrran*, to turn, and *cernan*, to churn.

But these examples of imperfect treatment might be multiplied to thrice the length of the present article, as we have collected upwards of a hundred words used by good writers, and thoroughly English, which Dr. Latham has overlooked. But we must hold our hand. The publication of the remaining parts of the dictionary may, however, give us an opportunity of returning to a work which deserves to be studied by every one interested in the language, and as a book of reference is admirably fitted for general usefulness.



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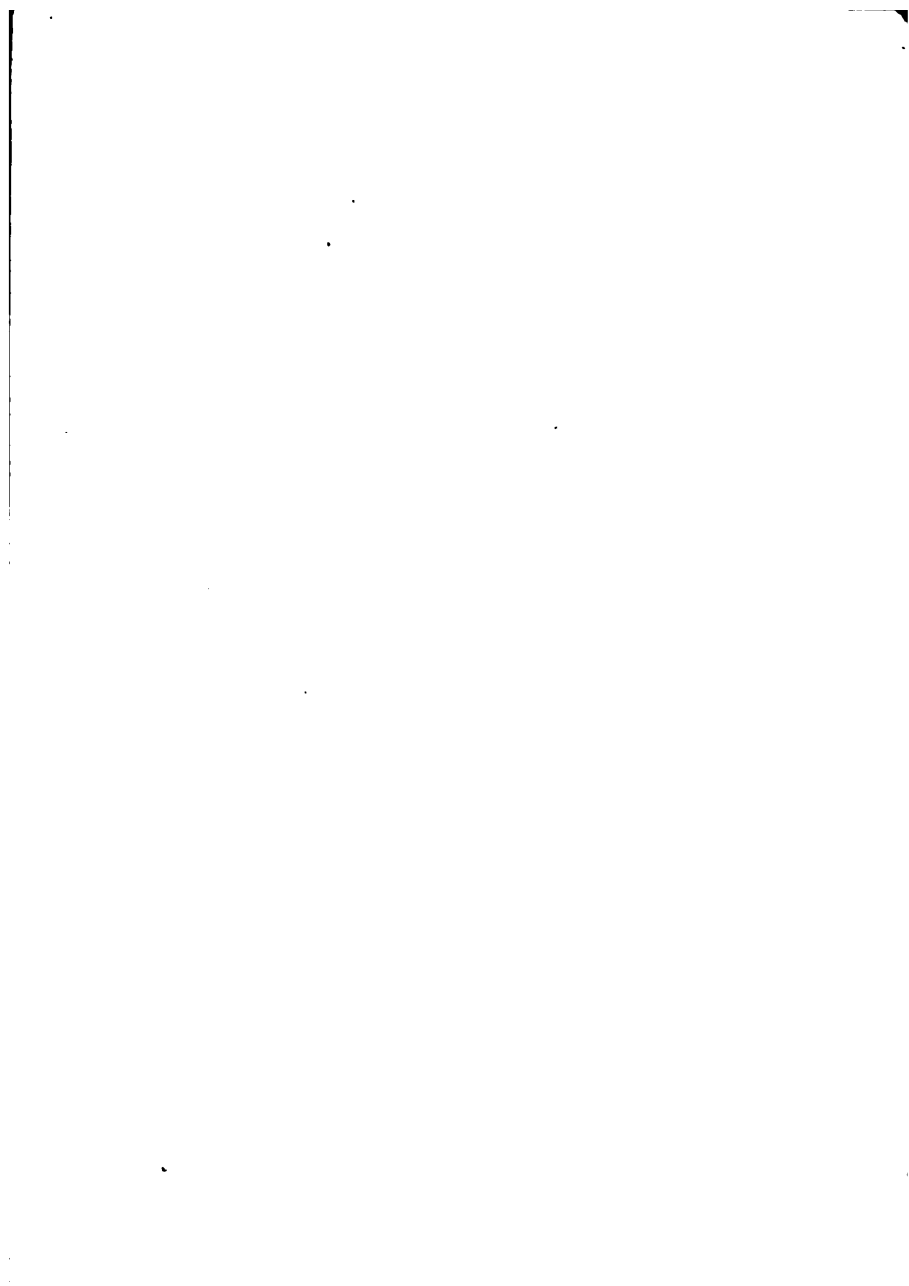
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